PRECEPTS AND PRACTICE.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS

OF

THE THIRD VOLUME.

PRECEPTS AND PRACTICE.

FASHIONABLE FICTIONS.

It seems that the French have, like the English, been latterly somewhat overrun with what are called fashionable novels, and which, if we may judge from what we see in the reviews of them, are nearly equal in merit and accuracy to those which have of late years deluged the circulating libraries of London.

M. Eugene Guinot has just shown them up in a very agreeable manner. "It is very strange," says he, "that Fashion has not yet found a historian, in a country in which she so pre-eminently flourishes, and where literature is so active and general. A History of Fashion would be at once curious and entertaining, and

certain success would await a judicious and experienced writer who would carefully collect its stories, exhibit its manners, explain its influence over society, and collect all the delightful anecdotes with which the annals of the fashionable world are filled. Materials for this yet unaccomplished work may be found scattered over the pages of books of every age, but it would require great caution and prudence to consult the numerous existing documents, for upon this particular subject writers of every age seem to have evinced the grossest partiality. In all times, whether the writers be grave or gay, their universal object appears to have been to calumniate good society, and especially those of fashion."

Let us look at the literature of the sixteenth century, the events of which have afforded so many subjects for modern plays and romances. The dandies of that period called themselves *Raffinés*, and are described to us as savages, brawlers, and duellists, going abroad sword in hand. In their day, fashion every morning bedewed the turf of the *Pré aux Clercs*, supreme

bon ton exhibited itself in a stab from a dagger, and Fashion wrote her laws with the point of a rapier.

This rude kind of elegance held sway even under the reign of Louis the Thirteenth. The next reign produced a new race of dandies, whom Molière and his contemporaries represent as weak and wicked; immoral coxcombs, habituated to all sorts of crime, and trampling under foot every just and proper feeling. Later than this, in the reign of Louis the Fifteenth, came in the *Roués*, who, if literature be to be believed, exceeded their predecessors in all kinds of misconduct. At last, under the Consulate, sprang up the *Incroyables*, a race of dandies whom plays and novels innumerable have covered with ridicule.

The dandies of the present day are not much better treated, and future ages will form a very curious idea of our men of fashion if they implicitly rely upon our coeval authorities, literary and graphic. Open, for instance, a "Journal des Modes:" the print exhibits to your astonished eye the dandy, enveloped in a richly-

embroidered dressing-gown, lounging listlessly on a sofa, simpering and smirking, with his head lolling on one side, like a boarding-school Miss. Near him stands a groom, in top-boots, who has the care of his toilet. The compilers of these "Journaux" know nothing of any servant but the groom. The *valet-de-chambre*, in their opinion, is obsolete: the groom they see, and therefore are satisfied that he still exists; and therefore he is served up with all sauces, and upon all occasions.

Next to these journalists come the novelists, who appear to derive their notions of men of fashion from their graphic contemporaries. There are in France, just now, between two and three hundred novel-writers, full of wit and talent, but all perfect strangers to the world which they propose to describe, and of the ways of which they have not the remotest idea. These young authors, who have never trod carpet, as M. de Talleyrand said, at a period when carpets were yet considered luxuries, delight in the most brilliant descriptions, formed in their own lively imaginations, regulated only

by what they have read of other times, and thus create a world of their own, for their own special use and service. They introduce their readers into visionary saloons and unearthly banquetting-rooms, and then fill them with the most extraordinary race of men and women of their own manufacture, whom they call people of fashion. Their men are wonderfully compounded of the *Raffiné*, the *Roué*, and the *Incroyable*, all jumbled together, and splendidly enriched with some new traits of their own. A dandy thus constructed is always favoured with a romantic name. He is called, perhaps, Julio de Mirandal, Palamede de Flamicour, or Clodimir de St. Amaranthe; and is then made to perform a part in the *Beau monde*, from the record of which posterity is to judge of the state of society in the present day.

By way of a specimen of this style of writing, take this:—We enter one of the most elegant houses of the Chaussée d'Antin: we reach the bedchamber where slumbers the dandy Julio. The room is hung with blue Cachemire, woven with green palm-leaves; the floor covered with

ing, falls into a sort of careless reverie. Abufar ventures to break silence.

"Am I to get the pistols, Sir!—do you fight to-day?"

"Fight!" replies Julio; "no, not this morning I think. I am not quite sure. Give me my pocket-book. Let me see—Friday,—this is Friday, is it not?—Yes, Friday. No. To send to my lawyer—ah!—at four, Fanny. No; there is nothing about a duel to-day. Your master, Abufar, has become as pacific as a priest. I must see about this: only two duels this month; and here we are at the 19th. How exceedingly odd! If I don't take care I shall get positively rusty. I *must* have an affair to-day: I must, indeed. I'll put it down in my memoranda, for fear I should forget it."

Thus was the sword of Julio destined to slumber in its scabbard one day longer, and his pistols to lie untouched in their ebony case, which was beautifully inlaid with death's-heads and cross-bones in ivory.—Julio suddenly abandons his pugnacious reflections, and inquires for

his courier. Abufar brings him in a bundle of letters and the newspapers. Julio begins with these, and glances his eyes hastily over them: he then begins to open the letters. Twelve little sweet-scented notes lie before him: he first counts them, and carefully examines the superscriptions before he opens any one of them.

Behold him unfolding the love-fraught correspondence. Abufar had already placed near his master an ebony trunk, lined with rose-coloured satin. Every note, after having been read, was thrown into this receptacle, as the poor, after having lived, are cast into a common grave. Julio's reading was interrupted sometimes by smiles of satisfaction—sometimes by a frown; —sometimes by a loud laugh—and occasionally by short observations,—such as "Psha!"— —"Indeed!"—"Already!"—"What madness!"—"Under the elms!"—"Umph!"— "That's love!" "No;"—"A shawl;"—"Something new;"—"Too green!"—"Absolute tyranny!" All at once, after having read the last of the epistles, Julio exclaims—"Capital! excellent! I wanted an affair, just to keep my

hand in. The Baroness bores me—persecutes me. I have it! I will put her note in an envelope, and send it to her husband: he is a brave man and a kind friend of mine. Nothing can answer the purpose better." And Julio proceeded to put his design into execution, with that ferocious coolness which invariably characterizes the perfidy of men of fashion.

"Who are in the antechamber?" asks the dandy.

"Your two fencing-masters, Sir," replied Abufar.

"I shan't fence to-day."

"Your curiosity collector is here, and your Rubens merchant," said Abufar.

"Let them in," said Julio. "Are those all!"

"No, Sir," replied Abufar; "there is your waistcoat tailor, with some patterns to select; your pantaloon tailor; your tailor for gloves, and your tailor for linen, who is waiting to measure you for some shirts."

To all these essential subordinates Julio gives audience, and then orders his breakfast. A tray covered with the most exquisite viands

and choicest wines is put down. Julio just tastes the wing of a partridge *aux truffes*—moistens his lips with a few drops of Cyprus wine, to which, whether because he has no appetite, or because, like Byron, he dreads the calamity of growing fat, he confines his repast, and concludes his extremely moderate meal by throwing his napkin at Abufar's head.

"Take away all this," said Julio, "I want to smoke; send Mahomet here."

Mahomet was groom of the pipes; Julio ordinarily called him his slave. Since smoking has become so universally fashionable, the dandies have discovered a new subject for luxury. We have only yet spoken of Julio's bed-chamber. His apartments consisted of eight other rooms; an antechamber furnished with red velvet benches fringed with gold—a saloon fitted up in the style of the seventeenth century—an Italian dining-room of white marble and gold—a boudoir after Watteau—a bath-room, painted in fresco—a Gothic hall of the time of Charles the Seventh—an armoury wainscotted with oak, and ornamented with pikes, lances,

cuirasses, bucklers, swords, daggers, guns, pistols, and all the implements of war—and next to this the divan, a Turkish saloon, deriving its name from the vast oriental sofa which surrounds it. On the walls of the divan, pipes of all sorts, and of all nations, were ranged in equal splendour and regularity with the swords and trophies in the armoury—all nations and all people were represented in this vast arsenal of *smokery*. It contained specimens of every pipe in the world, from the calumet of the savage to the philosophical pipe of the German student, from the Persian narghila down to the little earthen doodeen so energetically nicknamed the *Brulegueule* by the French corporals. In this divan there were neither chairs, nor tables, nor furniture of any kind or description—nothing but piles of cushions which lay scattered about, and a china japanned closet filled with boxes of cigars.

Mahomet, who was custos of this chamber, was a mulatto dressed with the mingled fashions of the eastern and western worlds. He wore an Egyptian cap, a blue polonaise,

cossack trousers, and yellow morocco Turkish boots.

"What will you smoke, Sir?" said the slave to his master. "We have received several new pipes from Cephalonia. The secretary to the Embassy has sent you some small cigars from Madrid, four cases of 'Cubas' have arrived from Havre, and I have sent for some 'Brazils.'"

The dandy decided in favour of a Havannah cigar, and after having dismissed Mahomet, proceeded to his stables. They were splendid —infinitely more like drawing-rooms than places for horses. Those deputies who declaim from the tribune against the vast expense which has been incurred in building a palace for the monkeys in the *Jardin des Plantes* would perhaps be less indignant at the luxuries enjoyed by those interesting animals, if they were but to see how Julio's horses were lodged and accommodated.

Julio's stables were furnished just like drawing-rooms: there were damask curtains to the windows—the walls were lined with mahogany, on which hung the best engravings of Charles

Vernet. From a raised space, inclosed by a gilt railing, the dandy saw his horses pass in review before him;—here it was he entered into the most familiar technical conversations with his own stable-boys, and displayed to their admiring minds the extent of his knowledge in all matters relating to horse-flesh. Having cast his eye over some new acquisition to his stud, and caressed his favourite saddle-horse, he retired, saying—

"Tom Pick, I shall ride the sorrel-horse to-day—you will ride the dapple-grey—Time must be killed—I shall go to the wood. Abufar, come, dress me."

The dandy's toilet occupied an hour and a half—six painful quarters of hours to poor Abufar, who during the whole period remained exposed to a continued shower of reproaches and maledictions. Julio is never satisfied with his dress—his hair is parted too much to the right on his forehead—his stays are laced crookedly—his boots do not shine—his neckcloth is not tight enough—he changes his waistcoat fourteen or fifteen times before he can decide which to wear

—then his groom is so slow. At last, having consulted all the glasses in the room, he calls for his hat, his gloves, and a perfumed handkerchief —fills his pocket with pieces of gold, which, by a happy association of ideas, recals to his mind a circumstance which otherwise might have entirely slipped his memory.

"Abufar," cries Julio, "how fortunate it is that I have recollected my misfortune of last night! Abufar, take three hundred louis to M. Tancred de Ravenelles. I recollect now I lost them to him last night at whist. I never saw a fellow persecuted with bad luck as I was."

Julio mounted on his sorrel takes the road to the Bois de Boulogne—he proceeds by the Avenue de Neuilly, "inspecting" the extraordinary persons who happen to pass him in carriages. In the wood he meets his friends the *élite* of the Parisian youth. They cluster together—they talk—they smoke—they discuss the last race; it is, in fact, a sort of equestrian congress. At last a wager is proposed. One dandy lays that he will leap his horse in his tilbury over a five-barred gate. Considerable sums are betted on

[illegible]

[illegible]

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either side. Julio bets three thousand francs in favour of the leap. The horse is put to the gate, and, by dint of flogging, tries the jump, dashes himself against the top rail, breaks one of his legs, and knocks the tilbury to pieces. Julio has lost—bad luck now, better another time.

The dandies return to Paris after their ride, and dine at a *café*. Their banquet is worthy of Lucullus. The bill for five, amounts to four hundred francs, which is about the average of the daily expenses of these gentlemen. Julio returns home to dress for the opera, to which he goes in order to exhibit to the world the beauties of his gold-headed cane, so richly set with rubies and emeralds. After the opera the dandies meet again at the club. Some sit down to play, while others engage in affairs which, if more venial, are not much less perilous.

Such, reader, is the life of a French dandy, as described by the novelists of the present day. What the events resulting from such a course of existence must naturally be, it is not difficult to imagine. Indeed, all the heroes of modern

novels reach the *dénouement* of their works by the same road. If the reader wish to hear what happened to Julio, he shall have the history, which is extremely short and simple.

The day following that, which we have described, Abufar comes to Julio, and tells him that a lady closely veiled wishes to speak to him. Accustomed to romantic adventures, Julio immediately orders his groom of the chambers to admit her. She enters the room—her veil falls—and the dandy beholds the unfortunate Baroness.

"You see before you," exclaimed she, "the most wretched of women. Julio, we are betrayed!"

"Indeed!" replies Julio; "the incident appears remarkably dramatic."

"Yes, Julio," sobs the wretched woman; "how it has happened I know not; but a letter I wrote to you yesterday has fallen into the hands of my husband."

"I am annihilated!" said Julio.

This brief conversation ends as Abufar enters the apartment and announces the Baron. The

Baroness has only time to rush into a closet before he enters the room. The husband demands satisfaction of the dandy.

"I am entirely at your service," says Julio.

"I am glad of it," replies the injured husband; "my friend is waiting. Are you ready?"

"Permit me," says Julio, "to dress myself. Do me the kindness to step into that closet—you will see something that will surprise you."

The Baron enters the cabinet and beholds his wife. The scene which ensues is terrible—Julio and the Baron go out and fight—Julio kills his adversary; after which he returns home and dresses for the play; the Baroness suddenly presents herself to his sight, pale and wretched—her hair dishevelled, her dress disordered.

"Julio," sobs the unfortunate lady, "I forgive you, and I die!" Saying which she falls dead at his feet.

Julio casts a look of indifference on the body, and, turning to his groom, says—

"Abufar, give me my opera-glass, and then go and fetch the coroner: but take care that none of his people do any mischief to the furni-

ture. The deuce, why it's a quarter past eight o'clock! *Norma* must have begun. How time flies.

As he comes out of the theatre Julio meets one of his friends.

"Hasn't Grisi been delightful to-night? By the bye, my dear fellow, I must tell you what has happened to me since yesterday—something terrible, upon my honour, in the highest degree, and more dramatic than '*Lucrece Borgia*.'"

Every week of a dandy's life is marked by similar adventures, which, however, fortunately have not always equally deplorable results. But there is an end to this bright yet baleful career. The day at lasts arrives—the day of retribution, when the dandy finds himself utterly ruined by his luxury and his passions. Four ways are then open to him: if he is a philosopher, he enters the army; if he is handsome, he marries for money; if he is adventurous and romantic, he goes to Hungary and enrols himself in the corps of Schubri; if he be neither adventurous, nor philosophical, nor handsome, he kills himself.

This is the picture of a dandy as fancifully painted by our modern novelists, and this fabulous creation is generally accredited by those who only see the world out of their windows, and who study the manners and customs of high life in the circulating libraries.

This little *histoire* if made into "English society" would serve equally well as an epitome of English "fashionable novels," (or rather novels of "fashionable life"), as it does in its present form of the equally absurd productions of the *Pretenders* of France.

MY LAST TOUR.

SEVERAL times in the course of my life I have started on pedestrian tours—sometimes alone, sometimes in company with other adventurers; but a very few days' practice upon most of these occasions served to convince me, that, while men could be persuaded to build travelling carriages, and horses could be found to draw them, and that with such adjuncts other men might be driven when they chose, and walk when they liked, the option was exceedingly agreeable, and the carriage by far the preferable mode of conveyance to the points which it might be desirable to visit, or the views which it should seem essential to the happiness of the tourist to contemplate.

Well do I remember upon one of these expeditions setting forth with all the glee and energy of youth, accompanied by a dear and excellent friend, now, alas! no more, and by two others, (who still survive,) from Abergavenny, for a gentle rational walk through South Wales. Nothing could be brighter than the morning—nothing clearer than the sky—nothing fresher than the air. In those days, worldly care for the future, or retrospection of the past, weighed us not down, and after a breakfast which might have been mistaken for a dinner, we marched off at a smart pace, taking the line of the Brecon canal, towards Crickhowel, which lovely village we reached in due time, and without fatigue.

We were delighted with the success of our enterprise in its outset, and although the extent of our first day's journey did not much exceed six miles, we rejoiced in the ease and comfort with which they had been achieved.

An incident occurred here, somewhat ludicrous, perhaps, to read of, but, under the circumstances, and considering the exercise we

had taken, by no means diverting at the time to the parties concerned.

When we reached the clean and quiet inn at Crickhowel we slightly refreshed ourselves; but that was all, inasmuch as my dearest friend of the party *had* a friend, who had the prettiest place in the neighbourhood, who had frequently pressed him to come and dine, and stay with him, and bring whatever companions he might have with him. To do at least the first, it was resolved that we should visit the worthy gentleman *en masse*, to give him, the opportunity of exercising his hospitality upon the present occasion, an acceptance of which, as he had an extremely agreeable wife, and some remarkably pretty cousins, we naturally preferred to the male, matter-of-fact dinner at our ostelry, which, however agreeable *per se*, sank to mortal dulness by comparison, in our then young minds, with the *coterie*, or more properly the *petticoatery*, at the castellated mansion of our presumed host.

Having brushed the dust from our shoes, and washed it from our lips with small potations of ale, the name of which is pronounced as softly

as it tastes (but which, having no consonant in the construction of its name, I dare not venture to write for fear of being wrong), we proceeded to the fane of hospitality, which we approached by one of the most beautiful gates I had then ever seen; the upper part of which, with a laudable anxiety for mixing usefulness with ornament, our friend (hitherto unseen by us) had converted into a laundry.

Through this gateway the view is something delightful—in the days of which I now write the Continent was closed against us by war, and the romantic beauties of Switzerland had not become as common to Cockneys as the wilds of Shooter's Hill, or the dells of Beulah Spa—the scenery of Crickhowel *is* Swiss, and for what it may want in comparative extent, it fully compensates in the gentleness of its beauty. If time has not confused my recollections (for it never can obliterate the memory of those days of happiness) the view from Crickhowel churchyard is something scarcely describable by a pen like mine.

All this did we gaze on with rapture; nor was the loveliness of the scenery at all unsuited

to the beauty of the two young ladies, to whom the master of the domain, after we *had* been in due form introduced to him, presented us. One was a blonde, the other a brunette, yet much resembling each other in features and figure, the main difference between them existing in the retiring gentleness of the fair Emma, and the animated gaiety of the less fair, although not less handsome Jane.

After these introductions had taken place, and the conversation taken a turn upon the beauties of the situation, and the exceeding good taste of our host, a similar ceremony was performed as regarded the lady of the mansion, who, to say truth, was as agreeable a person as I ever met with, and whose warmth of manner really made us feel at home even in a strange house.

We walked and talked, and looked and laughed, but still there came no invitation, and I began to think that our leader had miscalculated the liberality of his friend; however, the proverbial hospitality of Wales was not destined to be damaged in the person of our

host, who, after a little parley with his better half, who had "dropped astern" of us for the purpose evidently of "speaking her consort," came up and told us that they expected a few neighbours at half-past five, and, if we would join them, he and his wife should be most happy.

"We are early people," said the good-natured man; "but, although half-past five is the hour, six *will* do."

"We muster strong," said our leader; "we shall crowd you."

"Not a bit," said the lady; "we have always room for friends, here."

I must confess, taking the blue-eyed, fair-haired Emma into consideration, I was not ill-pleased that the invitation had been given, nor, as far as less sentimental feelings, and, in all probability, more substantial enjoyments, were concerned, did I at all disrelish an extremely savoury smell, wafted on the breeze towards us from the window of the kitchen, which presented itself to our view while crossing the court which contained the offices; neither did

the appearance of four of the finest trout I ever saw, borne in a basket by a boy to the door of the said kitchen, diminish the satisfaction which the kind bidding of our host had excited.

It was now just past two o'clock, and we made a demonstration of retiring, in order to inspect the lions, such as they were, and to give an opportunity to one of the party to take sketches of any of the "pretty bits" which might strike him. And here, *par parenthèse*, let me advise every man (unless he draws himself) most carefully to eschew the society of a male sketcher on a tour. In the society of women—let them do what they may, let them loiter never so long, and copy nature till "daylight sets" (as Moore has it)—a man must be happy; without affection—without love or friendship—such an association, *tête-à-tête*, could not well occur—therefore a female sketcher is an extremely delightful companion;—but, to be forced to climb up a rock, or slide down a ravine, and sit for hours together, while your *male* friend is taking his view, regardless alike of time or circumstance—is something unbearable; if he stop to follow his pleasing

vocation in the neighbourhood of Neath or Swansea, and the breeze is fresh, the stir-up of the ashes, of which the artificial soil is thereabouts composed, is, as *I* know, not delightful. I must not, however, digress—for I have a great deal to tell, one way or another, in this end of my tour or rather my tours; so having left our worthy and hospitable friend, and our sketcher having gratified himself, while our appetites were growing (for in those days I could eat), with various pictorial transcripts of the church and other striking objects, we returned to our inn.

One little turn off from the straight road of the pedestrian tourist, (which I then was,) perhaps may be permitted; I have already mentioned the adaptation of the upper part of our beautiful gateway to the purposes of washing out the fine linen of the gentleman with whom we were going to dine, and, eke, also, of his lady, the two cousins, and divers and sundry other persons of the establishment. In the church we found the same spirit of *improvement* had been at work; windows had been altered, beautiful memorials of the olden time had been obliterated, and, in

short, everything had been made as snug and comfortable as our hospitable friend's wash-house.

I *might* add here one little fact as regards the holy martyr, EDMUND, King of East Anglia, to whom this said church is dedicated—a church remarkable as being the only one in the county with a spire, and in which the bones of the Pauncefoots and Herberts of Dan y Castale rest in the most agreeable security, and which I think I *will*, because anybody who doubts me has only to refer to "Cressy's Church History of Brittany."

"Edmund, during the terrible irruption of the Danes through the eastern parts of England, in the year 870, was taken prisoner by the Danish general, Ingwar; after being fettered, he was tied to the trunk of a tree and severely whipped. In this situation, the Danish soldiers filled his body with their arrows, and, to finish the tragedy, Ingwar himself chopped his head off; after which, as the veracious monks tell us, they threw his body (having subjected it to every sort of indignity) into an adjoining thicket.

"Many years afterwards," say the monks, "when the retreat of the invaders gave them leisure and security, his pious subjects sought for his remains in order to have them reverently interred. The body they soon found, but the head was undiscovered; when, according to the tradition, 'there happened a wonder not heard of in any age before,' for, whilst they dispersed themselves in all parts, and each one demanded of his companions, where it was the Danes had cast the head? the head itself—the same head—answered them aloud in their own tongue—'*here! here! here!*'"

These words, sounding very like those uttered every night in the House of Commons by heads equally empty with that of St. Edmund, led them to the spot where the head lay, where they found it guarded by a wolf holding it between its feet, but upon comprehending the characters and objects of the searchers for it, the intelligent beast immediately gave it up. This is the history, as given literally to that confiding community who are in duty bound implicitly to believe the traditions of the priesthood.

Well, our sketching friend having finished his memorandum, and the clock having struck five, we all betook ourselves to the inn, where, much to their own contentment, two of our servants had arrived with our bags and portmanteaus from Abergavenny, in a sort of gig which they had hired; leaving to their masters all the delights derivable from a walking tour, while, as I have before observed, carriages and horses might be bought or hired.

After an amicable squabble about rooms, we went to dress; and, by a quarter before six, were in marching order to the castellated mansion of our kind and liberal friend. In those days loose pantaloons were unknown—shorts, with knee-buckles and long stockings, were as indispensable attributes of a dinner-party at a cottage as at a court—and, accordingly, we four proceeded—dust taken into the calculation, and the sun pretty high, in July—up the street of Crickhowel, to the laundry-gate of the castle—which, I ought to say, boasted of a street-door—not a knocker—which door, when opened, exhibited to view—and does now, I dare say—a perpen-

dicular flight of stairs right before you as you enter; never mind—if men *will* build little castles, why should they not build them after their own fancy? nothing to *us*—we were full of fun—excessively hungry, and quite resolved to be entirely pleased with anything and everything that occurred—all that I cared about, being the getting next to the fair-haired, blue-eyed Emma, at dinner—and so—we arrived——

Doors flew open at our approach—everything was *couleur de rose;* the lady of the house all smiles; Emma all shrinking, and melting; Jane, all sparkling, and dazzling, both looking so beautifully—better than they did in the morning—in spite of the before-named sun, which came shining in, so brightly, that I could not help anathematizing the system of dining by daylight (a custom which I have grown to hate the more, the longer I have lived)—that, if my heart had only fluttered in the forenoon, I felt it regularly beat upon my return—she was a charming girl, and that's the truth on't.

When we entered the circle, there was a larger party assembled than I expected; we

were singularly and severally introduced, to every individual, male and female, then and there congregated—because, in those days, it was accounted reasonable so far to make every member of a society with which he was incorporated so far aware of the names, characters, condition, qualifications, and peculiarities of his companions, as might prevent his unconsciously vituperating the grandfather of his next neighbour at dinner—indulging in a sarcastic anecdote of the mother of the lady who sat opposite—or favouring the gentleman on his right-hand with a detail of some remarkable enormity which had been committed either by himself or his elder brother.

I was consequently made acquainted off-hand with Major, Mrs., and Miss Evans; Dr., Mrs., and the three Misses Morgan; Lieutenant and Mrs. Jones; Mr. and Mrs. and Mr. Howel, junior; Major and three Misses Price; Mr. Rice; Mr. Jones of Mgldmpwn; and Mr. Apreece Jones of Gmpwldmygd;—to the pronunciation of which distinctive dignities I never could have attained, if our excellent host, having perceived how much I was puzzled at the

sound, had not resolved good-naturedly to write down the names of the places, in order to simplify the affair.

My appetite having reached its highest eating power, I waited impatiently for the summons. The trout were before my eyes—but then what an extensive party!—and even then I heard our excellent host inquire whether anybody else was expected.

"Yes, my love," said the lady; "there are Mr. and Mrs. Williams of Pillgwylligam, and all the Jenkinses of Carbygllgomd."

"Very well, dear," said the obedient husband; and the conversation went on.

Presently the Jenkinses of Carbygllgomd, and the Williamses of Pillgwylligam came; and then with the greatest delight, I heard the lady of the house give permission to her lord to say they were ready.

There being then present not less than twenty-six persons, I was puzzled to know how the affair was to be managed; but I waited not long. The drawing-room doors were thrown open, and, to my utter astonishment and dis-

may, which were met with instantaneous sympathy on the part of my travelling companions, I saw a large lout of a livery-servant walk into the room with a huge tray, covered with tea and coffee cups, a large silver tea-pot, ditto coffee-pot, ditto sugar-basin, ditto cream-jug, followed by the fellow whom I had seen bring in the trout to the kitchen-door, dressed in a similar garb on a smaller scale to that of his huge predecessor, bearing on a salver a plate of hot buttered cakes, and another of diaculum-plaster bread and butter.

I started at the sight—my companions, scattered as they were, did the same, and our eyes met. What was to be done? Our leader, as I call him, for he was the oldest, and had undertaken not only to show us the country, but to introduce us to his friend, came to me, and whispered something about a mistake; and, such was his anxiety to wound no man's feelings, and his desire to show that he appreciated the kindness of our host, that he hinted the propriety of satisfying ourselves with the fare provided,

and making up for the deficiency by a supper at the inn.

Now, if we had not been pedestrianizing, amenity might have conquered appetite, and the desire to do the delicate might have superseded the dinner; as it was, I for one voted for immediately bolting; nor should we—for we three of the four were in the majority—have long hesitated upon the measure, if our worthy head had not consented to explain to the gentleman of the house that the difference between the hours of dinner in Wales and Westminster had caused a little *contretemps*, which, under all the circumstances, was extremely inconvenient to his friends. I never saw a man more truly vexed. "They always dined at three at the latest, and of course he had imagined, when he talked of six as being in good time, we should understand what the invitation meant."

There seemed (at least to *me*) no alternative but the abandonment of the fair at the château for the fare at the inn, although our leader, in the plenitude of his good-nature and consideration,

would rather have stayed and fasted with his old friend than endanger his peace of mind, or run the chance of annoying him, by quitting his house for the enjoyment of the finest dinner that Ude could devise.

Talking of abandoning the young ladies, I cannot help noticing an instance in which the word "abandoned" once assumed a sense certainly not in accordance with the intentions of the lady who used it. During the war, and while numerous French emigrants of distinction were living in England, one of the highest rank, full of attractions and accomplishments, having rather exceeded her very slender means, was unable to pay the rent of her lodgings, whereupon the landlord, whose estimation of the French *noblesse* was only commensurate with his belief in the genuineness and reality of their claims, and even titles, seized everything which the Duchess—for she was of that order—possessed, to secure himself.

In this emergency, and being personally free, the poor dear Duchess hurried off to one of her best English friends, whom she found in her

drawing-room surrounded by company, and, unable to restrain her feelings, exclaimed, in the middle of the circle, "Oh, my dear Madam! such thing has happen to me—two men come to my room—dere dey stop—I have nobody to help me—I am an abandoned woman, and have lost all my propriety."

This abrupt announcement startled several of the ladies to whom the Duchess was not personally known, even more perhaps than it surprised those with whom she was better acquainted; however, a few moments of time, and a few words of explanation, set the matter right, and the Duchess got her "propriety," as she called it, back again.

I confess, upon the occasion of our departure from the Château de Crickhowel, one of the "abandoned" young ladies sadly haunted my imagination; however, our retreat was really inevitable, and so we departed, promising faithfully to return to Pope Joan, long whist, and, a something tending supper-wise, at a very early hour.

Alas! I lament to say, to those there was no

return. When we got back to the inn the larder was empty; some small fragments of cold meat only served to awaken the appetite which they could not allay, and it was very nearly eight o'clock when two roasted fowls and a boiled leg of lamb, or perhaps Welsh mutton looking lamb-like, graced the board; vegetables *au naturel*, and snow-white bread, "illustrated the solids," and I believe never did banquet bear more unquestionable marks of activity than our humble, but to us delicious, repast, so long delayed, but so much rejoiced in.

The sequel is what I am coming to, as touching pedestrian tours. The little *contretemps* as to the dinner at the other end of the town was nothing; we grew comfortable and happy, and put our legs upon chairs, and drank, what might perhaps not have been expected, some remarkably good claret. The idea of returning to the Teetotalers—as they were then *not* called, inasmuch as such absurdities had not then obtained—faded, as did the light; and even I, with my fair Emma—and, oh! she *was* so pretty—still in my mind, felt a fatigue arising from the morn-

ing's walk and the afternoon's ramble, to which the *soulagements* of the refreshments had given a decided character, just at which period a remarkably nice travelling carriage suddenly halted before the inn; the said halt being instantly followed by the well-known cry of, "First and second, turn out."

We raised ourselves from our horizontality and went to the door, when we found the travellers to be three delightful persons whom we had left at Malvern, but who were now on their way to a hospitable mansion near Cardiff, which shall be nameless. We exchanged a few words while the exchange of horses was going on, and explained to the fair inmate—fair, though dark—of the carriage, our intention of walking through the principality: she smiled, as she *could* smile—doubtingly, as I thought, but she smiled—and, all being ready, the word was given, and away they went.

We returned to our humble, ay, *dear* humble parlour, and talked over the passing travellers; there *was* a pause at last in the conversation, and the eyes of our leader—for so I still call

now, as I considered then, our dear lost friend —met mine. I had said nothing which could lead him to the conclusion, at which, however, it seemed he himself had arrived, nor had I the slightest conception of what *he* meant when he said—

"Yes; I think so too."

Now, what I *did* think I did not choose to explain; perhaps, from an apprehension of being laughed at, for something very like a defection from the pedestrianism to which we had so earnestly looked forward; although I admit that the sight of our late companions at Malvern "rolling and bowling," as George Colman says, along the road, and all—

"Without hurry, or bustle, or care,"

did excite in my bosom some feelings, if not of discontent, at least of a consciousness of the absurdity of trudging and tramping over a country through which, as I have before said, one might be comfortably driven, stopping at points worthy of observation.

"I think so, too," said my dear friend.

But not a syllable did I utter upon the subject; and when I saw our sketching companion in close discussion with his servant as to the ease and comfort of a huge pair of what are called "high-lows," destined for the next day's service, I resolved to stifle all further expression of my feeling, and go on.

We parted for the night—the *aimable blonde* and the animated *brunette* having been superseded in our minds by the natural desire for rest, arising out of our feats of the day and the anticipation of our less comfortable feat of the morrow; and so we went to our white-curtained beds, all so fresh, so sweet, so clean. Dear Crickhowel, I love thee still!

By eight, breakfast was on the board: nothing could be nicer. One likes to be long at breakfast, and it was just nine when the meal was concluded. Every man to his room, every man to see that his servant—for the maintenance of this rear-guard, who travelled at their ease, made the thing more ridiculous—had filled his master's wallet with all that was essential for the journey. At ten we were to start: down

I came; I found our dear leader in the little parlour rowing us for being so slow and so unpunctual.

"I am ready," said I, emphatically stumping the end of a stick, which I had bought as a support, on the floor.

"Are we all ready?" said he.

"All," said the other two.

Whereupon our said dear friend said to his servant—

"Get it, then."

What IT was I did not at all know, but I supposed it might be his wallet, for he had none slung over his shoulder, or perhaps some of that unspellable ale in which the Principality rejoices: but no; in two minutes after "Get it" was pronounced, up rolled to the door our own dear comfortable barouche all open, drawn thereunto by four spanking posters.

"Why," said I, "here is the carriage!"

"True said our friend, "I sent for it last night from Abergavenny. *Now* perhaps you will understand what I meant after dinner by saying, 'I think so, too.' The sight of our Malvern

companions going along at their ease had created what I consider a very reasonable doubt of the superiority of a walking tour. I saw the feeling in the expression of your countenance, and agreed; so now cast off your wallet, leave your stick, and jump in."

And so we did.

I might here enlarge upon this tour, which was as extraordinary as it was delightful, but, as I am only treating of pedestrian proceedings, I am bound to end my notice of it at the moment I step into the carriage.

As we left the pretty little town we cast a longing lingering look at the house which held the charming Jane and Emma, but, it being a quarter past ten, it was most natural to imagine, according to the family scale of hours, that they had passed a considerable portion of the morning before we passed their residence. On we went. I have never seen Crickhowel since.

As this was my first attempt at a pedestrian tour, I crave, not without hope, pardon for detailing my proceedings so minutely. My

second and third were equally failures, and then came an event in my life which, although it did not, as the sequel will show, cure "my truant disposition," or check my rambling, certainly placed me in a different position in society, and induced me to devote a certain portion of my time to matters of higher importance. A young cousin of mine, a female cousin, died, by which event the whole of her very large fortune, through her uncle, my father, came to me, and I found myself suddenly full of wealth, and consequently of much more importance in the world than I had ever expected to be. The death of so young and amiable a girl was, of course, a severe blow to the family. I had never seen her, therefore the calamity which put me in possession of four or five thousand pounds a-year was not likely to affect me personally so much as it naturally would those who had been acquainted with her beauty, her virtue, and her merits.

Amelia Vincent, whose husband, had she lived, I was destined to be, was the idol of her father, my uncle; having lost her mother while Amelia

was yet a child, all his care was directed to her education—in fact, they were never separated till death took him from her, upon which event she came to reside with my father. The great object of my uncle's ambition was, that we should be united, and so intent and earnest was he upon this favourite point, that, in case of her not marrying me before she was of age, the fortune which he bequeathed *her* separately was to pass immediately to *me*, chargeable with an annuity of three hundred a-year to her for life.

These precautions, however, proved fruitless; from the period of my uncle's death poor Amelia's health declined, symptoms of consumption showed themselves, and, as a last resource, she accepted an offer from her oldest and dearest friend, Lady Sandford, to accompany her to the south of France, where she died soon after her arrival, in the twentieth year of her age, a victim, as Lady Sandford wrote to my father, to grief and regret for her much-loved parent.

I have often reflected upon the strange coincidences which occurred in the early part of my life to prevent our having ever met. While I

was at school and college she and my uncle were living in Barbados, where most of his then valuable property lay; when they returned to England I was availing myself of the earliest opportunity afforded by the peace so gloriously earned by my country and her allies, in making an extended tour of Europe; and at the time of my uncle's death was upon my return home; so that, as my poor cousin did not survive that event more than eight months, if I had been aware that she was in the south of France, I might have seen her, for, upon a retrospective review of my journal, its dates compared with the events connected with her removal and subsequent death placed me one day, unconsciously, within three leagues and a half of her residence.

However, I rejoice that, at that period of her existence, I did *not* meet her;—to see those to whom we are either by affinity, or affection without affinity, deeply attached, sinking, without hope of rescue, into an early grave, is something which requires sterner nerves than mine to endure. Yet I sometimes think I *should* like to have seen her—the destined partner of my

existence. Still, perhaps, all is for the best; no picture of her remains—nothing by which I can embody my regrets; but my imagination still paints her fair and faultless, as I have heard she was. Instead of sharing her fortune, her death made it all my own. This circumstance alone cast over my earlier life a gloom of which I never could divest myself: I felt as if I were a widowed husband, and would willingly have given up the wealth which had devolved to me, if my cousin could have lived again to share with me the much smaller income which my father himself had been enabled to bequeath me.

I suppose I shall be laughed at for cherishing this strange feeling; suffice it to say, that I have not been able to conquer it: the sudden surprise, the chilling check to all my early hopes of happiness, never have been overcome, and here I am, at forty-seven years of age, an old bachelor.

Well, then, having made this very disagreeable confession, I may be excused for that periodical unsettledness—if I may use the expression—which has induced me in the autumn of

every year to undertake a pedestrian tour, upon the "ease-and-comfort" plan of having "hard by some" carriage "at my charge," so that I might never be compelled to do more in the walking line than might suit me; nor need I add that each succeeding season brought its periodical hints as to shortening the tether which bound me to head-quarters.

The first indication kind Nature was good enough to give me of the weight of her favours was exhibited in a certain degree of difficulty which I found in springing over a rail or in getting under it; the alternative each succeeding year becoming more embarrassing. I admit that I have adopted the "getting under" plan for the last three or four seasons, but the difficulty I find in even doing *that*, is not trifling.

I have a tolerably large, and an extremely agreeable circle of acquaintances—many people who know the world less than I do would call them friends—but still the memory of past days and the recollection of what *I might* have been, compared with what *I am*, makes me seek at

certain times the charm and comfort of solitude. I do not mean in the gloomy sense of the word, I mean the charm and comfort of being alone, free, and my own master, uncontrolled, unchecked, and independent.

This feeling—this desire to leave all gaiety—all the society in which one ordinarily moves—to cast off the world and its cares, or, as they are sometimes called, pleasures, has led me to make my annual tour just during the period in which partridge-shooting ceases to be a novelty, and pheasant-shooting has not begun. In this country, until we sent out expeditions to the North Pole, the enterprising heroes in which stirred up the ice which need never have been disturbed, September was one of the loveliest months in the year; last September was not particularly fine; however, punctual as the clock, I started in a light carriage from London to my point, some hundred and sixty miles from the metropolis, and there at a remarkably good inn left I my Britska, taking with me no servant.

Now this omission may be looked upon as by

no means characteristic of old bachelorism—but it was always part of my plan upon these rusticating rambles to be wholly unknown. I had been in two parliaments—what my politics are, matters little—and I decline mentioning whether I am Whig, or Radical, or Conservative, or Conciliative; the truth being that I made two or three speeches which, in these degenerate days, would have made a good deal of noise; I had also distinguished myself (Heaven save the mark!) as chairman at certain political dinners, and, in fact, my name had been sufficiently before the public to render it impossible that I should traverse the provinces with anything like a chance of peace and tranquillity unless I rejected for the time my own patronymic. Wherefore, following the example of a noble lord, whose manifold talents and universal acquirements have rendered him an object of equal wonder and admiration, I clothed my popularity in a mist, or cloud, which assumed the name of Smith.

Of course I had seldom, if ever, occasion to mention the name, travelling in a perfectly plain and even crestless carriage, without a valet,

or any sort of "help," (as our excellent friends the Americans would say,) but still there I *was* prepared, as Mr. Smith, whenever called upon, to maintain and vindicate whatever I might have said or done during my progress, in my own person as Mr. Singleton Vincent.

This year as usual—with a reliance upon Mr. Murphy still unshaken, because the greatest men are liable to mistakes, and because, moreover, in the reduction to practice of a great new system, some little errors *may* occur—I took my departure, as I have already said, from London, and deposited myself in an excellent inn, and my carriage in a good "lock-up coach-house," in an admirably well-built and well-conditioned country-town, in which, to my utter delight, I was not personally known, and where, to my slight dismay, my real name, for I inquired after myself, did not appear as yet ever to have been heard of.

Hence was it I began my last tour; and, I confess, somewhat to the amazement of mine host, took my departure in search of the picturesque, wearing what has become a sort of

tourist regulation-jacket, wallet with provisions, a silver bottle, well basketed, of brandy, and sundry portable comforts wherewith to sustain nature. I thought, when I shouldered my stout stick, on which I firmly relied in difficult passes and intricate passages, I saw an expression on the countenance of mine host, indicative of his contempt—or rather, I believe, compassion—for the taste of a gentleman, "who behaved as sich, and came in his own carriage," who could prefer climbing and clambering about a parcel of hills and rocks, to taking it easy, and reaching the next stage, with four horses, in one hour; or, doing what he thought no doubt still better, staying, "comfortably," in his drawing-room, looking out of the window into the market-place till dinner was ready.

Off I went, at an easy pace. I soon got clear of the town and its outskirts, and found myself somewhat anomalously, rising up a beautiful down, whence, as I gradually ascended, I beheld such a splendid map at my feet, in which hill and dale, woodland and corn-fields, just stripped of their treasure, and still beaming with the

golden tint of harvest, green meadows, and a bright sparkling sun, lay before me. The reader, if he, will be quick—or, if it be a "she," will be quicker still, perhaps—in recognising the part of England which I was traversing, and in which alone such a beautifully-diversified prospect could be found. I felt my heart beat with pleasure—I inhaled the fresh breeze—I watched the white sails which dotted the ocean, even while I tracked along the narrow lanes the loaded teams of the farmer. My mind was filled with thoughts of our foreign power, of our domestic prosperity, and I sighed—yes, sighed! to think that I was alone, not only on the down, but in the world, and had no one near me to whom I could impart a feeling which I could scarcely define.

I pursued my journey—lost my way—regained it—lost it again,—for never did I see a more thinly-populated country than this, which seemed teeming with all the blessings of nature. On I went, anxious to gain a cluster of rocks, which, even on the edge of this most beautiful and highly-cultivated land, jut out upon the sea.

As I pursued these objects apparently near, they seemed to fly from me, and, I believe, I had achieved a good nine miles before I found myself seated on a broken fragment of the pile, whose base was washed by the clearest sea I had ever seen within a hundred miles of land. It was a lovely prospect. How long I stayed there I know not; but my sensual feelings were so excited, as well as my mental ones, that I applied myself to my wallet, and demolished a considerable portion of a cold fowl which had been stowed away in it, and washed it down with a moiety, at least, of my own brandy—I say my own in contra-distinction to that of mine host of the Crown—diluted with some of the most delicious water that ever trickled from a spring within a hundred yards of the "briny deep."

It was, in truth, a scene beautiful to behold; and why is it that, with one's faculties about him, a man can sit on the beach or the rock and watch wave after wave breaking at his feet with an intense interest? So it is: every roll of the surf, samely monotonous as it may seem to common observers, has something new in it; one

curls its head higher, another dashes forward more impetuously, a third slides along with a scraping crunch of the shingle; but each individual arrival is invested with a character which, to a mind ordinarily imaginative is strangely attractive.

The sight and sound of these billows, superadded to the fatigue of my walk, the natural inclination to repose after eating, under such circumstances, a hearty luncheon, not to speak of the certain *quantum* of Johnson Justerini's brandy, properly diluted, which I have already described, produced upon me an effect which might have proved fatal, considering the narrowness of the ledge upon which I was lodged; but, sooth to say, I did what children in the cradle do, fell asleep on the rock, and never woke until the sun had emulated my example, and was just dipping his broad, red face into the dark-blue sea.

I never was so astounded in my life. I felt extremely grateful that it was no worse, and began forthwith collecting all the *matériel* of my wallet as well as I could in the dusk, and fortunately for myself, scrambled down while it was

yet sufficiently light to guess my way from the pinnacle on which I had been perched. But what then?—where was I?—which road was I to take?—whither was I to go?—half-past five o'clock, at the end of September, was in fact night. I stopped—listened; I heard a dog bark at a distance, and the bells of a team tingling through some of the lanes with which the lower part of the country was intersected.

It grew darker, and all I could see was that I had made good my footing on a road—leading whence or whither I knew not. I stopped again, and again listened:—one of my night beacons in a tour of this sort is a blacksmith's shop, whence not only the gleam of the forge, but the harmonious tingle of the anvil triply struck, send forth a cheering encouragement to the mystified traveller; but, no—there were no blacksmiths in this valley: as an old friend of mine, now no more, would have said, "all was innocence, there was neither forgery nor vice in that sweet dale." The consequence of which was, that I was left to grope my way hopelessly along an unknown path, and trust to chance for a night's lodging.

This was all very well for an hour or so; but I honestly declare that, when at nearly seven o'clock I had plodded along without seeing the vestige of a habitation, the clouds of night closing round, and not even the tinkling of a sheep-bell to relieve the stillness in which everything seemed buried, I felt a sort of loneliness and despair, in their effects far more powerful than I had ever desired to excite. It sounds absurd, but I think I could almost have wept; for I was an outcast, a wanderer, and without hope; and, although, if I had been driven to pass the night, *al fresco*, at the foot of a tree, it might have done me no more mischief than it has done hundreds of the brave men with whom we live in constant intercourse, and who, during the glorious war which secured an universal peace, slept a vast number of evenings with no better shelter, still there was nothing to repay me for the inconvenience; no glory, no honour, no anything, but an infernal cold in the morning; and it was just at this period of my proceedings that I said to myself —and when there is nobody else by, a man is

very agreeable company to himself in the way of *soliloquizing*—"By Jove, this shall be my last tour!"

I walked on—I looked at the stars—I endeavoured to make out thencefrom the direction in which I was moving, but I somehow confused myself, and so resolved, without caring particularly to or from what point of the compass I was progressing, to continue to do that which persons less wise or wiser than myself either can, or must do, as the case may be—follow my nose,—and so I did, and to some good purpose, as will presently be seen.

After an hour's farther progress straight on end I saw a light, not very far before me; whether it was in a window, or in a field, or even what it was, I could not ascertain. I halted—mounted a bank, and watched the object; below the first light I had seen I saw another light moving about. That light must be in the hand of some human being, thought I: I walked hastily on—a dog barked—cheering sound—another seemed to answer him. I heard the sound of wheels—I heard the voices of men, and, what was still

better, that of a woman. I pressed onwards, and, in ten minutes, found myself at the gate of a farm-yard, into which the cart, whose grinding, creaking wheels had struck upon my ear before, was just turning.

I presented myself to the female who held a lantern to guide her husband, as I presumed, into the yard, and I thought she would have died upon the spot. She almost screamed with astonishment at beholding a stranger at that time of night—nearly eight o'clock, when the "world" dresses for dinner; and it was not until I explained to her that I only wanted to be directed to some inn; that I was a traveller, and all that sort of thing, that she became sufficiently composed to inform me that there was no inn within four miles, and that it "were a chance if I got any bed there when I got to it."

This announcement caused me some little pain.

"But, Sir," added she, "master's in, and I'm sure he won't let you walk all that way for such a fool's errand.

I didn't quite like her mode of expression; but I did not at all dislike her notice of referring the case (as they say in Chancery) to the master. "If you please," said I, "for I really am tired."

"Come this way, Sir," said the sturdy wench. "I say, Docksy, you see and shut the gate—I'll bring ye candle in no time. This way, Sir."

And so, following my Thais, I proceeded to the back, or rather side door, of the farm-house.

I was playing a sort of blind-man's buff, which, as I saw three horses going into the stable, I thought, upon the old principle of the game, fully justified my groping onwards; and, so having crossed a pantiled ante-kitchen, I reached a sound flooring, in the shape of a passage, at which point I was bidden by Thais to stop until she had prepared the master and "missus" for the unexpected approach of a strange visitor.

I halted as directed, and expected to hear that sort of huffle-scuffle which invariably takes place in a *ménage* of the calibre of this humble-

looking dwelling, upon the approach of an unexpected visitor; but, to my astonishment, no: all I heard in the obscurity of the lobby was "Show the gentleman in."

And so I *was* shown in; nor, according to the quaint expression of dislike exhibited to his visitor by the great Lord Thurlow—for great, indeed, he was—was I shown out. The story is old; but, as *I* myself grow old, I find stories grow young; and jests that were stale when I was a boy, are new and fresh to those who are something "more than boys now."

The story—I beg pardon of my older readers—was this:—Lord Thurlow had received a strongly recommendatory letter of a young gentleman for a living in his lordship's gift. He didn't much like the *recommender;* but, acting impartially, said to his secretary, with whose attendance he rarely dispensed, "Show him in!"

The gay candidate for preferment put himself through the door, delicately dressed, and redolent of what was *then* considered a beautiful perfume—"lavender water." Thurlow looked

at him for a minute, and then said to the secretary, "Show him out!"

In this position I honestly confess I felt it extremely probable I should be placed; *mais, tout au contraire*—I like a little bit of bad French in a story, it *is* so fashionable, and so *piquante*. The master of the house, whatever he might be, came forth, and bade me welcome in the warmest terms, and I stepped forward into one of the nicest, prettiest rooms I ever saw, and for the appearance of which I confess I was wholly unprepared.

Tea was going on—a beverage which may or may not be wholesome; but there was a blazing fire (a very delightful sight upon the turn of September), and on the fire a kettle, which wasted its steam on the "desert air," which if it had not done, thanks to our new scientific discoverers, might have carried away half the apartment.

The mistress, or I should rather say, by her appearance, the lady of the house (and that very much astonished me), was one of the handsomest and best-conducted—if that expression

conveys my meaning—women I had ever seen in such a position. Two daughters, one of about sixteen, the other fourteen, were assisting in the honours or duties of the tea-table with the best possible manner, and a sturdy boy of about twelve, who sat on a footstool (called by no outlandish name) at his mother's knee, sipping his souchong, or whatever it was, presented a fireside sketch and beautiful specimen of the yeomanry of our happy country, and I was delighted to see so charming a picture of rural felicity.

"I have a great many apologies to make," said I, "for venturing thus to intrude, but, if I may take the liberty of asking for information as to the road upon which I am travelling, and whither it leads, I will trouble you no more, since all I want is to be put in the way of getting back to the place whence I came."

"My dear Sir," said the master of the house, "I hope you have a better opinion of West-country hospitality than to imagine that we are going to suffer you to stir from this house to-night."

"Sir!" said I, starting at the frank and open manner in which the unexpected invitation was given.

"Most assuredly not," said the wife; "our house is humble, and our fare not fine, but, as you have unintentionally strayed at least five miles out of your way to your inn, and as there is no inn within nearly four miles of this, we must beg of you to excuse our homeliness, but make this your home at least for to-night."

"Really," said I——

"Oh, really," said the lady, "we are not altogether unaccustomed in these picturesque parts of the country to the wanderings of pedestrian tourists; nor, Sir, are you the first of the class that we have had the pleasure of accommodating with a night's lodging; so, Emmy dear," added she, addressing her eldest daughter, "tell Hannah to get the white room ready for the gentleman—see that there is a good fire lighted in it, and every thing made comfortable,

"But," said I——

"I assure you," continued the mistress of the house, "it is not we, but you, who confer the

favour; we live here in a state of almost primitive simplicity, and in perfect retirement, and the occasional visit of a stranger, like yourself, is quite a delight to us."

"Yes," said the husband, "I assure you it is; but, dear, surely the gentleman will take something—a glass of wine—some spirits and water—some ale—some cider——"

"No," said I, "I thank you;" but, at the same time, very much stricken with the difference of manner and tone of conversation which was so clearly perceptible between the master and mistress of the house.

"What *will* you take?" said the wife, with a graceful *empressement* wholly at variance with the position which she was filling.

"By and bye," said I, "thank you, I will."

"Ah!" said she, "now the truth comes out. You are fatigued, and, I dare say, dear George, he is hungry, and so I will go myself and take care that something is got ready for supper. Meanwhile, dear George, show the gentleman to his room, he may like to deposit

his wallet, or perhaps change his shoes. Go, there's a dear."

And accordingly, while she departed by one door, George and I left the room by another, which opened on to a flight of stairs leading directly to one of the nicest bed-rooms that ever farm-house contained. A buxom broad-backed wench was lighting the fire; the curtains were drawn, and all comforts in progress. As I glanced my eyes round the cheerful apartment, which was hung with green paper with black mouldings, I saw on the walls, in ebony frames over the fire-place a portrait of the King; on one side of the door two of Woollett's shooting prints, on the other Reynolds's Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy, supported on either side by fine impressions of the Battles of La Hogue and the Boyne.

The dressing-table was a perfect toilet with an excellent looking-glass—the criterion in a small establishment—and on it was placed, to my utter astonishment, a remarkably pretty Sèvres inkstand with pens and ink—another criterion—resting upon a purple morocco blotting-

book which contained writing-paper "of sorts." The truth is, the neatness, not to say elegance, of the dormitory staggered me, and I became extremely anxious to ascertain the name of my host and hostess; a result to which, however, I could not attain, because mine host himself did not—for what reason I do not pretend to guess—appear willing to leave me in possession of my apartment, till Hannah—a remarkably fine specimen of the red and white school of Nature—had finished her operations and retired.

When she was gone, and the sound of her stout stumping down the stairs had subsided, my new landlord quitted me, and I enjoyed the comforts of a good washing and brushing, which, after my sleep on the rock and my walk in the vale, were most delightful; nor was it rendered less agreeable by finding close to my hand a bottle of Jean Maria Farina stretching its graceful length along the side of the looking-glass. This mixture of rusticity and elegance puzzled me. "This," said I to myself, "will turn out to be either a matter of mystery or murder; however, here I am, in for it. Where

there is a woman, like the creature I have seen below, I am safe; and, if there *were* a doubt upon my mind, those dear budding beauties, her daughters, should go pledges for her in my heart."

So down I went, and sat myself as comfortably as I could, upon a sofa (a little too short, and hard, and straight-backed, I admit), and talked with mine host and his wife upon various matters, labouring under the oddest sensation of not knowing their name, as if it made the slightest difference whether, under the circumstances, I did or not. I, however, consoled myself by the reflection that in the morning, when I went forth to sniff the air before my departure, I should find it painted in letters of a legal length upon his carts in the yard.

At nine, supper was announced, and I perceived that the boy of twelve years old had been permitted in honour of the occasion, much to his joy, to remain "up" to be present at the meal, to which, I honestly confess, I had no objection; but my surprise as to the nature of the establishment was increased when we were ushered into what evidently was the "drawing-room"

adapted for the occasion, to the banquet, where more prints, drawings even, and books, formed part of the intellectual furniture, backed up by a pianoforte and a huge pile of music.

"What a charming snuggery you have here!" said I.

"Why," said mine host, "my wife is fond of these little knick-knacks, and our two girls have never been to school; all they know, their mother has taught them, and I believe I may say, before their faces, that they do some credit to their instructress."

"Oh, Pa!" said the elder one.

"Oh, dear Pa!" said the younger one.

"As for the boy," added his father, "He starts for Tiverton school at Christmas; but he is not quite a dunce."

"Come, dear George," said the lady, "cut up that fowl. What will you have?" addressing herself to me; "some roast fowl, or some fish? You must not be surprised—my husband is so much occupied all day that we make early supper our regular meal, at which we can all meet comfortably. It is but homely fare still——."

I was delighted. Herrings fresh out of the

sea, a fowl white as the driven snow in flesh, and a cold game pie, formed the banquet to be apologized for. I should only have liked some of my London friends who decry my appetite in the pea-soup atmosphere of the metropolis to have seen the way in which I attacked this half-dinner-half-supper sort of meal.

There was wine—there were spirits, and, in recommending his brandy, my friend George—whoever he might be—gave me to understand that it was quite pure and genuine, or, as the sign-boards say, "neat as imported." I thought that the wife, during the unreserved approbation of his liquor in which George indulged, gave him a look as if to indicate that, however genteel my manners and behaviour appeared, I might, for all they knew, be an excise or custom-house officer.

Mine hostess was helped to a *leetel* hot brandy-and-water; the young ladies had a little sherry-and-water; and George, the boy, went to bed.

"You are musical," said I, to mine hostess.

"Yes," said she, "I am exceedingly fond of music—are *you?*"

"I delight in it," said I—fearing, I allow, that the admission would produce some dreadful exposure on the part of mamma or the daughters.

"Emmy, dear," said George, "will you and your sister sing us that duet which I am so fond of?"

"Ah!" thought I, "there it *is*—what a fool I was to touch the spring that is to set them going!"

"Yes, Pa," said Emmy, "if Ma will accompany me."

"Why not accompany yourselves, dears?" said the lady.

"I would rather *you* would;" and the sweet girl gave her "Ma" a look which conveyed at once to my mind her anxiety not to exhibit in the double capacity of player and singer before that strange old man—which no doubt having reached the forty-seventh year of my age, I appeared to sweet sixteen to be.

"Well, come, then," said the cheerful mother; and, as she proceeded to the instrument, I screwed myself up into a patient and

suffering attitude, resolved, if possible, not to fall asleep during the performance—perfectly secure, as I had nobody to sympathize with me, from laughing out.

If all that had gone before had mystified me, this part of the evening's proceedings settled it; never did I hear sweeter singing in my life; the girls' voices were perfectly melodious, and happily adapted by nature for the two parts of the duet—the accompaniment was played with a masterly skill, and a taste and feeling which nothing but innate genius can impart. It required no effort to restrain my laughter, but it required a much greater effort than I was master of, to suppress a very different sort of emotion. Their singing went to my heart, and brought tears from my eyes.

"Who," said I, enthusiastically to "George," "do you say, has taught those dear young ladies?"

"Their mother, Sir," said mine host. "I hope some day, if Fortune smile on us, as she has, (or rather, should I say, Providence,) that we may have done with business, and then perhaps the dear girls will be where they ought to be."

Yes, thought I—and I wonder what your business is now—and what business they have here?

"But never mind," continued he, "you are getting sleepy—you are tired; Emmy, dear, ring for the gentleman's candle."

"Might I," said I, "before I go—as this is my only opportunity—may I ask for one more favour?"

"Oh dear yes," said George's wife—for else I know not how to name her—"if you please."

And away they went again to the instrument, the difference being, that in the second instance a trio superseded a duet—and the mother took her part in a manner which quite satisfied me of her ability to instruct her children.

I tendered a thousand thanks—and the "ladies" withdrew, leaving mine host and myself *tête-à-tête:* my candle was lighted—the buxom wench was told to put it down—by which I saw that "George" was resolved to do the honours, by conducting me to my chamber himself. We however replenished our glasses once, and, during the process of emptying them, I descanted upon pedestrian tours, and he,

upon the various schools of farming; so that, before we parted for the night, I found that he rented a considerable quantity of land, and was, in fact, a prosperous man.

When he saw me to my room, he told me that they were an early family, and breakfasted at half-past eight; but that that was no reason why I should disturb myself; that *my* breakfast would be ready whenever I chose, and that nobody should wake me till I rang my bell.

I mentioned that I must take my departure early in the morning, to which he replied—"We shall see about that, Sir; I think you will like our place by daylight, and I can give you some very nice shooting here, I am on good terms with my noble landlord, and we have plenty of sport—and it cheers my wife's heart when anybody who appreciates her accomplishments, and those which she has imparted to our daughters, comes this way—so about to-morrow we will talk when to-morrow comes. Good-night, Sir, and a sound sleep to you."

With these words and a cordial shake of the hand, George took his departure. I, having

performed all the necessary preparatory evolutions for going to rest, stepped into one of the nicest beds I ever was introduced to, and—hear it, ye valetudinarians, to envy rather than blame me—instead of falling bump upon a hard healthy mattress, sank, tired as I was, into a downy feather-bed, and felt myself like a diamond in cotton.

My sleep was undisturbed—dreams I had none; nor was it till I heard a noise in my room that I awoke. I peeped out from between the curtains of my comfortable nest, and perceived the back front of the same buxom girl whom I had seen before, right opposite to me, who was most sedulously engaged in lighting my fire.

I was strongly moved to speak to her, to satisfy myself of the name of my host and hostess; but there is nothing so puzzling in the world as a want of knowledge of the localities of a still, small, quiet country-house. Words wander through wainscots awfully, and the creaking of wooden stairs and landing-places is a perilous sound, so I repressed my curiosity, and

shammed being asleep, resolved to wait for my information from the boards on the carts, when in my fox's slumber I perceived my attendant take up and carry away my boots, for the purpose of having them cleaned; no part of my drapery, which was pendant on the chair by the fireside, did she attempt to touch. I revered the delicacy of the distinction, and, when she left the room, gave myself a turn-round in the bed, to ruminate upon the admirable qualities of women in every station of life.

Presently a gentle tap at the door provoked a "Come in," and I perceived not the buxom wench as before, but the "lad" who had "waited" at supper, and who stopped as soon as he had entered the room, and pulling the front lock of his white hair, which hung over his forehead, said—"Come for things to brush, Sir, please;" whereupon I indicated to him the coat and the cætera, which required his care, and he departed.

At this period of the day, or as perhaps in town I should have thought it night, I resolved to have a peep from the windows, in order to

reconnoitre my position, of the nature of which, as far as the scenery was concerned, I was wholly ignorant. I felt that sort of anxiety, which, in days when masquerades existed, a man experienced in getting a glimpse of the face of some charming creature, whose figure and conversation had enchanted and enslaved him. By all that was in the house I was as much pleased as puzzled. Now for the peep out of it.

And, oh! could I even adequately describe the beauty of the view that struck me, when I drew aside the curtains of one of the windows! I am resolved not to point out the precise spot; but never did I in England see anything more beautiful. It was a bright, fresh morning: the trees, still bearing their foliage which had assumed the lovely varied tint of autumn, and which belonged, or seemed to belong, to mine host's domain, bowed their beautiful branches even down to the edge of the brightest, bluest sea that ever washed a tranquil shore. The sea of which I write *has* that peculiarity—it *is* blue, and wholly unlike the muddy, clayey,

milky wash which circumvents our happy island; by which remark, the exceedingly cunning reader may discover that it was not on the external edge of England I was located.

On this light blue sea were seen milk-white sails scudding in the breeze, with here and there a large ship booming along steadily; and, far away and beyond all these, were mountains—ay, mountains and valleys—which brought to my recollection other tours of other days.

Now try and guess where my host's farm was.

The excellent lad soon returned with my clothes, and, having solicited a little hot water, I proceeded to shave and make ready to present myself to the mistress of the house at breakfast.

All having been done which I could do in the way of preparation, I descended the stairs, wholly ignorant—or perhaps forgetful would be a better word—as to whether I should turn to the right or to the left when I got to the bottom of them, in order to gain the morning-room, but I had scarcely reached the lowest step before I was

welcomed by mine hostess, looking ten times handsomer in the morning than she looked the night before.

Now, I *have* an opinion touching this point—and I believe that, taking the run of women generally, morning dress is more becoming than evening dress, always taking into consideration that candle-light—not always lamp-light—is infinitely more favourable to beauty than day-light. Still, there is something in the morning dress of an Englishwoman, to which no other woman in the world can attain; and, although I hold that breakfast is a meal which never *can* be social—and which ought always to be solitary—(or, if one have a wife, merely *tête-à-tête*)—it is one of the most delightful things in the world to see how our dear countrywomen *do* look when they appear at that matutinal meal.

My fair friend was quite charming; her two affectionate daughters bounded naturally out of the room and welcomed me; and I was told that "dear George" was gone to order something about wheat and barley and other necessaries of

life, of which, except when they were exhibited in the shape of bread or beer, I knew but little —but that he would be back directly.

And he *was* back directly—and his daughters ran to him and threw their arms about his neck and welcomed him with a kiss—and his boy, who came dancing in to greet him with a colour like a rose, jumped up and clung to him in all the ecstasy of childish affection.

"Ah," said I to myself, "after all, this *is* enjoyment."

Well—we breakfasted: the details may be spared—but the mixture of substantiality with a superior degree of elegance which marked the repast again had its effect upon me; I was quite sure that there was something odd in the affair, and I began most uncharitably to think that for reasons quite incomprehensible to me, Mr. and Mrs. ——, whose name I did not know, had been somehow brought together under peculiar circumstances; a conclusion to which—(I beg a thousand pardons for the suspicion)—I was perhaps led by the account mine host had given me of the exceeding condescension on the part

of his noble landlord in regard to the shooting, &c.

Everything went on remarkably well; better eggs never were tasted, richer cream never floated on tea, nicer cakes never were saturated with fresher butter, nor was ever fowl more delicately grilled; not to speak of the salted herrings and the cold partridge pie; but it was all *so* good, so well done—I don't mean as to the *cuisine* alone, but the mode, the way of putting the thing down—that I stared with wonderment, and, when it was over, my awkwardness considerably accumulated. I did not know what to say, or what to do. I felt that I had intruded—that they had been hospitable to excess—they always are in *that* county. I really did not feel justified in accepting their kindness; yet the style of the whole thing was evidently above the possibility of offering anything in the way of remuneration, except, if I had had the opportunity, in the way of a *cadeau* to one of the daughters. I think the reader can understand the difficulty I laboured under; so, not knowing what better to do, I expressed the

warmest gratitude for the kindness I had experienced, and resolved upon abandoning my *incognito*—not perhaps that the name of Vincent would have been more interesting to the ears of the family than that of Smith, only that I wished to follow up the *annonce* with a hope that if they ever should come to London they would do me the kindness to let me know, and I should be too delighted to receive them, and show the world to the two charming girls, who seemed to me the most unsophisticated and lovely creatures imaginable.

I was, however, checked in this intention by "dear George" insisting upon my having a day's shooting, or at least some hours of it.

"I," said George, "am sure you will excuse me for a short time, for I have to look after my men, and this is a busy season with us: but my wife and the girls will try to amuse you till I come in, which will be about eleven or half-past, and then I think I *can* show you some sport."

I hesitated, and said—or rather did not say—but looked, as if I should intrude.

"*Do* stay," said Mrs. George. "If you are are fond of a beautiful country and plenty of game, I assure you my husband can show you both."

"If I don't——"

"Indeed you don't," said she, interrupting me: "we are but too happy to have such a guest."

"Well," said I, bowing.

"That's right," said George; "I'll be back as soon as I can, and meanwhile, dear, I leave our guest to you and the children."

And so he went his way, and I was placed in a most curious position, for, although I had been extremely anxious to get out after breakfast to look at my friend's name on the carts in the yard, the assiduous kindness of both master and mistress had entirely frustrated my intentions in that respect.

"Now, dears," said mine hostess to her daughters, "which is first, to-day—music or drawing?"

"Whichever you please," said the elder one.

"Drawing, too," said I; "what! have you the opportunity of masters here?"

"No," said the lady, "not a chance of such a thing, especially with *our* means; but, as George told you last night, luckily I was sufficiently educated myself to lead them on—as far at least as I am competent; but the march of art and science has been so rapid during the last fifteen or sixteen years, (I principally judge from the music I get sent down, and the engravings which illustrate the present popular works,) that I am still much behind my time. I hope, however, if we can manage it, next year to get the girls as far as Bath. An opportunity then may occur for them to see and hear enough to excite them to further exertions."

The more I saw of the lady the more I became interested about her, and, as I felt deeply the awkwardness of inquiring her name, which I was dying to know, and was particularly anxious to acquire the knowledge independently, I was delighted when she begged me to excuse her for a few minutes, as she had to start young George with his morning lessons.

I lost not a moment—as soon as she was fairly out of sight, away I walked—affecting a slow pace, but, in fact, going at a quick one, till I reached the little gate which led to the farm-yard. There were three carts there—two coming in laden, and one standing horseless and at rest. I trampled over the squashy surface of the *locale*, and read on the vehicles the humbly unromantic name of "George Spraggs; Bumpton." I confess I felt vexed and disappointed that anything so charming, so graceful, so gay, and yet so good as mine hostess, should be called "Spraggs," or that any place, so purely bright, and so serenely sweet, blessed with all the attributes of Nature, bestowed in her most benevolent mood, should be called Bumpton. It *was* very provoking—it destroyed the bright vision which had been beaming in my mind of inviting them to town the next season. What cared I for their apparently humble station, which I had before been fully convinced was an assumption? but the white letters on the black boards on the sides of the carts were horrible phantoms. If they came to London, and I took

them out, and people asked who that charming woman with the two delightful daughters was—what could I say?—could I admit that she was Mrs. Spraggs of Bumpton! I returned to the garden, but my mind was not at ease.

Mine hostess was not long in following me; and now, really, it was not conceit—vanity—nor anything of the kind—but I could not help feeling that she was sincerely pleased, as she said she was, by the accidental intrusion upon their solitude of a man of the world—one in fact, of a class with which, however she might in right of her accomplishments mix in society, it was clear she was not at the present time in the habit of associating.

"Come," said she, "the girls and the boy are gone to work, shall we sit down in this arbour?—built by my own hands and those of my children, the prospect from which is beautiful, and not the less delightful to *me*, because it commands a view of almost all our farm, so that, even while George is absent from home on business, I can still see him superintending his people.

I did sit down—so did she; and then she began to expatiate upon the particular beauty of a strong light which fell on the peak of one of the far distant mountains, contrasted with a deep shade which hung over the sea beneath, and this with a natural warmth and enthusiasm, and a manner so genuine, so perfectly lady-like, that, with the word Spraggs in my mind I could bear my surprise no longer. I gazed on her in mute admiration, and, when she had concluded her animated and artless eulogium of the charms which nature had bestowed upon the little Paradise where we were seated, she caught me with my eyes fixed on her sweet face, with an expression of delight and wonder. She was too quick not to appreciate the expression of my countenance.

"Ah!" said she, "I see you are puzzled—there are secrets in all families, and you are surprised to find a farmer's wife with feelings, tastes, and habits like mine."

"Why," said I, "I—honestly confess that I—I——"

"Oh," said Mrs. Spraggs!—(only conceive,

Mrs. Spraggs!)—"I will save you all further explanation of your feelings. We seldom see anybody who is struck with the oddness of our circumstances, for our noble landlord is seldom here, and of course sees nothing of his humble tenants; and, even if he *were* to honour us with any particular notice, there *are* reasons why I could not accept of his condescending hospitality."

"Ah!" thought I, "that's *it*—something's wrong with Mrs. Spraggs."

"I find an agreeable society at the parsonage," continued Mrs. Spraggs; "our curate, and his wife and daughter, are a great resource to me—they are very charming people."

"Oh!" said I to myself, "then there *is* nothing wrong with Mrs. Spraggs."

"But mine is a history," continued the lady, "and you shall hear it; for I see you take an interest in us, and it is so delightful to a heart, full I hope of kind and gentle feelings, to find anything like sympathy, especially when one has quitted the world, perhaps wrongly."

"Oh, dear, dear," said I to myself, "what *has* Mrs. Spraggs done?"

"Don't," said the charming woman with the odious name, "don't take notice to George, when he comes in, that I have made you a confidant of our fate; but there is something in your manner that convinces me that I may tell it *you*; remember, it is no great trust I repose in you, for you *can* tell nobody, since nobody knows *me*."

"I assure you," said I, "you may with perfect security trust me—not a syllable passes my lips which you wish me not to repeat, after I have quitted your happy hospitable house."

"Well then," said Mrs. Spraggs, "I feel—I don't know why—that, if we part without some explanation, you will conjure up a thousand strange fancies in your mind about me, and, perhaps, make some inquiries about me, which is the least desirable thing in the world. Now, listen:—My children, dearly as I love them, and devoted as we are to each other, even they do not know the real history of their Mother.

"I," continued Mrs. Spraggs, "was the only daughter of a gentleman of fortune, of family.

I lost my mother when I was a child—I became the idol of my father—he lived but for *me*—I lived but for *him*. His whole delight was centered in *my* society—his whole care was the improvement of my mind, and the cultivation of my talents, such as I possessed. It happened that, living as we did, entirely in the country, we saw little of society. I sought for none—I was happy with *him;* but a circumstance occurred when I was about eighteen years old, which diverted my thoughts into another channel. The curate of our parish—you will think, perhaps that I have a great affection for curates—had a son, and this son was the darling of his father's heart; but he was poor, and had no means of provision for him. My father made him an inmate of our house. He was his companion and friend—he arranged his papers—he superintended his farming, and," said she (with tears in her eyes), "while thus employed, he saved *my* life—rescued me from death by drowning. I could not be unmindful of *that;* besides, we are now at a time of life, to look back to early days and early feelings without hesitating

to avow their influence. I was attached to him, fondly attached to him: he knew it, and we had many conversations on the possibility of gaining my father's consent to our marriage. He saw, he knew it was impossible:—his conduct was admirable. His father died—he came to reside entirely with us. This constant association made our trials the greater; but he *was*, as he *is* to this moment, the most honourable, the highest-minded of mortals.

"Is this——" said I.

"My George—my own dear husband," replied she. "Soon after his father died, my own beloved parent was suddenly carried off by a fever. It seemed like a dream—a bewildering dream;—it was all too true; and I was removed to the care of my uncle, a worthy excellent man, but not to *me* like my poor dear father. With *him* I lived for a year, seeing my poor dear George occasionally, and, I own, by stealth; but, towards the end of that year, my grief for my father's loss having in some degree moderated, my uncle broke his intention to me of marrying me to his son, whom I had never seen,

and who was expected home from the Continent very shortly.

"I gave no answer, but told the history to George, whom I had the opportunity of meeting at the house of a dear and affectionate friend. He strenuously advised me to think no more of *him*, but to obey the wishes of my uncle; my non-compliance with which, I ought to tell you, involved the loss of a large fortune which I was else to inherit. Young women are not mercenary," continued mine hostess, "and I had made up my mind; but the agitation consequent upon this worry, coming so soon upon the grief which my dear father's death had caused me, brought on an illness which it was supposed would be fatal; nothing, my uncle was told, could save me but removing to a warm climate. The affectionate friend, of whom I have already spoken, was going to the south of France, and offered to take me with her! my uncle accepted the invitation, and I went."

"Yes," said I, "and, thank Heaven, recovered!"

"True," said Mrs. Spraggs; "but *here* comes my story: if I failed to marry my cousin,

whom I had never seen, before I was of age, the fortune which I should forfeit by *not* marrying him would devolve on him. I could *not* marry *him*—I loved another. I was not aware —indeed I was not," continued my companion, warming with her subject, "that my friend was so deeply interested in my fate; but so it was; and—I blush to tell you of the deceit that was practised—but, finding that my life depended upon my marriage with my former preserver, and knowing the impossibility of gaining my uncle's consent, she wrote to him assuring him of my death at *her* house near Marseilles. He naturally believed it, and the circumstances of the case naturally prevented our ever undeceiving him. He died; all the fortune of course went to my cousin, and, aided only by the produce of some jewels and other valuables which my dear father had given me, and some other assistance from my poor dear friend, who is now dead, George and I were married, and he took this farm, where his constant care and industry have 'increased our store,' and here we are happy and contented as you see us."

"And," said I, "have you never seen this cousin from whom you fled, and who is at this moment reaping the benefit of your disinterestedness?"

"Never," said she.

"Then," exclaimed I, bursting into a flood of tears which I could no longer restrain, "Amelia Vincent,—YOU SEE HIM NOW!"

A slight scream escaped her lips, and she fell senseless into my arms; at which precise point of time Mr. George Spraggs suddenly made his appearance on the lawn before us, having under his arm two double-barrelled guns destined for the day's amusement.

"What's this?" cried he, starting forward, and, (rather to my satisfaction,) dropping his artillery. "Amelia, what is it?—speak—tell me!"

"Hold, hold," said I, "I know it all——"

"Know what?" said George; "what is the meaning of all this?"

"Be calm," said I, "let her recover."

"But why is she ill—why agitated?" said George.

"One word will explain," said I: "trust me, this is the happiest moment of my life."

"I am bewildered," said the doubting husband; whose tender care for his wife seemed to prevail over every other of the conflicting feelings by which he was agitated.

"George, George," sobbed Amelia, recovering, "it is—my cousin—Singleton——"

"Singleton Vincent!" cried George: "is it to be believed?—have we been betrayed?—discovered—to be disturbed?"

"Heaven forbid!" said I; "this, my good friend, is no moment for explanation; Amelia requires your care—lead her into the house; calm yourself, my dear woman," continued I; "lean on *me*, and rely upon me for the rest of my life."

We led her into the little breakfast room, and in a short time she was able to relate the manner in which I had discovered myself to her; a repetition of my assurance that my visit was purely accidental seemed to make George happy, as the first impression on his mind was, that my coming had been premeditated, and that it was

preparatory to some disclosure which would break up and destroy the comfort which he and his happy family were enjoying.

There needs little more to be told. It was in vain I insisted upon returning to my cousin the fortune to which I had succeeded, nor would they hear of even changing their residence. All I could obtain was a promise of an annual visit from them to London with their dear children, in return for one of mine of equal duration at least, to them, in the country. Two additional rooms are already in progress at the cottage, and I have prevailed upon George to become the tenant of two adjoining farms, by persuading him that he must consider me a partner in the concern, upon which ground I also have claimed the right of furnishing the new portion of the house when finished.

Delighted to find myself, instead of being alone in the world, surrounded by such dear relations, I shall for the future divide my time between the pursuits and avocations of the metropolis and my rural home; reserving to myself till the time comes the pleasure of portioning off

my fair young cousins, and starting their merry brother in life; or, failing in that expectation, bequeath to the children the fortune which their parents would not accept, on condition that, out of affection to *me*, *they change their names* from Spraggs to Vincent.

All these circumstances have combined to cure the eccentricities of my "truant disposition," and it is with gratitude and contentment I look back to the results of MY LAST TOUR, which in all probability will be the LAST I shall ever make.

RUSSIAN POLICE AND ENGLISH PRISONS.

It has been so frequently remarked that the romance of real life is more romantic than the romance of fiction, that it might be considered useless to add another word upon the subject, but it so happens that two cases have recently come under my knowledge, which (each in its way) afford the most striking illustration of the axiom. Both these cases are genuine and authenticated, and, while considered as regards the romantic in real life, will at the same time exhibit to the reader traits of human nature in the present day, the existence of which the generality of readers would not believe. The first is derived from the official reports of the

Russian criminal court of the district of Zaraisk in the government of Kazan.

It appears, that for many months the district of Zaraisk had been infested by a formidable band of robbers, who, not satisfied with attacking travellers and relieving them of their property, were in the habit of carrying on their depredations in villages and even towns, where they committed the most horrible excesses; and to such an extent was this system carried, that the name of their chief, Kara Aly—meaning Aly the Black—had become the terror of all the inhabitants of that large and wealthy country.

For more than eight months this horde of brigands evaded the activity of the Russian police, and eluded the vigilance of the troops who were sent in pursuit of them in every direction. Nor did the promised reward of a thousand roubles for the capture of any one of the band, or the whole of them at the same rate, nor the still greater premium of five thousand roubles for the head of Kara Aly himself, produce any more satisfactory result; until at length, upon the earnest solicitations of the

people, and with a view to dissipate their apprehensions, which were hourly increasing, the Russian government resolved to employ more efficient means to exterminate a system of plunder and terror which had so long existed.

In consequence of these extended arrangements and increased means, Theodore Trazoff, the Assessor of the district, succeeded in capturing the formidable chief on the 1st of November, 1837, together with five of his accomplices, and a young woman, who, in the report to the Minister of Justice, dated January 18, 1838, is stated to be either his wife or his concubine.

In Russia, criminal cases are always investigated on the spot by a commission specially appointed for the purpose, empowered to examine the prisoners and witnesses, and report thereupon to the higher authorities. The examination in the present instance was confided to one of the chiefs of the district police, with an assessor, and a secretary of the town-courts, whose official designation in the Russian lan-

guage is "*Sckretarnijnohozienskohosouda,*" (how to be pronounced is not our affair,) to which tribunal the following order, signed by the Imperial Attorney-General, was directed:—

"*Order of the Imperial Attorney-General.*

"In the name of His Imperial Majesty Nicholas Pawlowitch, Autocrat of all the Russias: We, Imperial Attorney-General, direct and command the commissioners herein named to make due and diligent inquiry into the case of Kara Aly and his accomplices.

"Kara Aly, a Tartar, native of Kazan, is accused of having three times deserted from the army, of having, for the last eleven months, been guilty of heinous crimes, during which period he has committed fifteen murders, thirty-two robberies by main force, besides an immense number of ordinary thefts and pilferings.

"*Kazan*, Nov. 30, 1837."

After a month's labour the commissioners made their report, which consists of the following documents. We follow the Russian order

of proceeding, merely abridging the digressions and avoiding needless repetitions:—

"*Report of the Assessor, Theodore Trazoff, on the apprehension of the Brigands.*

"On the 1st of August, 1837, I received instructions and authority from the government to discover if possible the retreat of the brigands composing the band of Kara Aly, and to secure their persons. Fifty Cossacks, commanded by Ensign Djurilof, and twenty gend'armes, under the orders of Lieutenant Newmann, were employed jointly upon this service, but all our efforts to discover them were fruitless.

"On the 2d of October, having made my official tour of the district for the purpose of collecting the tax (niedoïmka) from the inhabitants, I returned to Zaraisk, having in my possession seventeen thousand roubles of paper-money, the produce of this levy; but, as it was growing dark before I reached the town, and it being too late for me to hand over the amount to the receiver-general of the district (Kaznatchy

njerdny), I was obliged to postpone making the payment till the next day.

"At midnight, as I was writing alone in my room, the door was opened suddenly, and I beheld before me a man of gigantic stature, dressed in a cajouck of a kind of fur made from sheep-skin, commonly worn by the Russian peasantry, and wearing on his head a cap of the same material. His face was nearly covered with large moustachios. His black beard, his long hair hanging dishevelled, and the wild lightning that seemed to flash from his eyes, gave to this sudden and unexpected apparition an indescribably horrid character: before I had time to call for help, the man had advanced close upon me, and, pointing with one hand to his pistols and dagger, he laid the forefinger of the other upon his lips in an authoritative manner to command silence.

"I remained motionless with surprise and anxiety. He seated himself by my side, and, fixing his eyes upon me, said, in a low, but firm and almost solemn voice—

"'You are Theodore Trazoff, commissioned to apprehend Kara Aly. Look at me—I am Kara Aly. Look at me well, for it is necessary you should know my personal appearance.'

"After a short silence, which I found myself incapable of breaking, he added—

"'Well, you have examined me sufficiently. Now I will tell you what has brought me hither. You have got here seventeen thousand roubles.'

"At these words I made an effort to rise from my seat and call for assistance, but the attempt was vain; for seizing me with an iron grasp, he threw me on the floor, and while he kept me down, he, with inconceivable dexterity, contrived to gag me with a piece of cloth: having done which, he proceeded to tie my arms and legs. Thus secured, he searched my clothes, and, taking out my keys, opened a chest of drawers which was in the room, and after a brief search, which, of course, I was incapable of hindering, found the seventeen thousand roubles in a box which I had placed in one of the drawers for security.

"Having achieved his purpose he came back to me, and, showing me his dagger, said—'I could have purchased your silence at the price of your life, but I despise you too much to fear you. If your Emperor had as many soldiers as there are stars in the firmament, Kara Aly would defy them all, and enjoy his liberty free and uncontrolled.'

"He then ungagged me and quitted the room hastily. Left alone, I called to my servants, who came instantly and liberated me, and I rushed out of the house with some of my Cossacks in pursuit of the robber; but all in vain. At some distance from the town we discovered the marks of horses' feet, which we traced to the direction of the mountains, but they disappeared at a point where three or four rocky tracts diverge.

"On my return to Zaraisk I ascertained that the door of my house had not been forced, but had been opened by means of a key: this circumstance, taken in connexion with the fact of Kara Aly's knowledge of my having seventeen thousand roubles in my possession, led me to

suspect that my servants were somehow concerned in the affair: however, they all protested their innocence, although I adopted every means of arriving at the truth—'that is to say,' adds the reporter, 'the whip and bastinado.'

"On the first of November I went to the fair of Rjarsk, and while there, I saw wandering about amongst the booths two men in the dress of Tcheremises, a people who inhabit the semi-Asiatic provinces of Russia. Kara Aly's features were too deeply impressed upon my memory to be for a moment mistaken:—he was one of the two. The next minute they were surrounded by ten of my Cossacks, who accompanied me. The resistance they made was terrible. The people would not lend us the slightest aid, and the two brigands defended themselves furiously with their yatagans.

"One of my Cossacks was killed, and three wounded. I succeeded, however, in eventually making Kara Aly my prisoner—for him it was. He threw his yatagan on the ground, and said, 'God's will be done! Take me—do what you will with me; I am conquered by some strange

fatality.' Then, turning to his companion, who was a short distance behind, still struggling with my men, 'Moussoum,' said he, in a loud voice, 'save yourself! I name you leader of the troop!'—(to this my men replied, with a shout of triumph)—'where, if you ever yield, may your tongue become as silent as a stone!' Fortunately, Moussoum surrendered without farther resistance, and we proceeded to bind them together.

"When they were in prison they both observed a strict silence, and nothing could induce either of them to afford the slightest information with regard to their associates. At length Moussoum, after undergoing the torture with great fortitude, permitted these words to escape him:—

"'Search on the Krym al (mountain of Krym), and you will find the cavern of Mustapha Iblis (Mustapha the Devil).'

"Having obtained this information, slight as it appeared, I forthwith set off for the mountain, at the head of two hundred foot soldiers and fifty Cossacks. Having arrived at the path

which leads to its summit, I placed the Cossacks, and one hundred of the foot soldiers, there, in order to prevent any escape by that route, and, taking the other hundred with me, I took the straight road which leads direct to the cavern that Moussoum had mentioned.

"We advanced but a few paces, when we saw a man running away: we instantly afterwards heard a musket-shot, followed almost immediately by several others:—three of my men were shot dead, and several others were wounded. This, however, did not check our advance; and in less than an hour we reached the cave.

"The firing suddenly ceased. A large and heavy stone secured the entrance of the cave. This we contrived to remove, and with our bayonets at the charge, entered in perfect darkness. Its inmates, however, had fled:—before the fire we found their victuals all ready for eating, but not a human being was left behind. When we listened, we could hear the heavy tramp of horses, and cries which seemed to come from under the ground on which we stood.

"The soldiers, in their superstitious ignorance, hesitated as to proceeding farther, fancying that the cries were those of infernal spirits, who were angry with us for disturbing them. Luckily, however, we discovered an opening in the opposite side of the cavern, which, although narrow at first, widened in its length, and brought us again into day-light, which showed us the marks of the horses' feet which we had previously heard: by this route we reached the position where I had left the Cossacks, whom we found in possession of four of the brigands, slightly wounded—and a female, who, in their company, had attempted to escape on horseback.

"We afterwards returned and searched the cavern, but could discover nothing except arms of different sorts, dresses of different descriptions, rich stuffs, and provisions in plenty, but no money; and, when I questioned the brigands as to the place where the treasure was deposited, they uniformly answered that God and the Khan alone knew where the money was concealed—they having given the title of Khan

to Kara Aly. I immediately had the prisoners conveyed to Zaraisk.

"When Kara Aly was informed of the result of my expedition, and the capture of his accomplices, he implored me to permit him to see his beloved Fazry—the young female who had fallen in our hands. Being anxious, if possible, to ascertain where the treasure, of which he was unquestionably master, had been hidden, I told him that, if he would give me information upon that point, Fazry should be brought to him. But all the answer I could obtain was a shake of his head, and the words—again uttered with a deep sigh—'God's will be done!' I could procure no other reply.

"*Zaraisk*, Nov. 3, 1837.

(Signed) "TIEDOR TRAZOFF,
"Assessor of the District of Zaraisk."

The next document is the report of the examination of Kara Aly himself, by the Captain Isprauwnik, which is given in detail.

"Q. Tell me your name, your surname, and the place of your birth?

"A. As God is the only God, and Mahomet his prophet, so am I the sole and only descendant of the Sultan of Kazan. My father is the Sultan Kerdy, and my mother Fatima, sister of Noussiram Bey. The 15th of December, 1803, was the day on which the people of Kazan heard of the birth of the offspring of their sovereigns.

"Q. You are endeavouring to impose upon me—you know that Noussiram Bey has proved that you are the son of the nurse to whom he had confided his little nephew, and who died in his infancy.

"A. Noussiram Bey, when he said so, lied like an infidel dog. He has robbed me of my wealth, as your Czar has robbed me of my kingdom. Might is great against right: I, at the head of my brave followers, was always in the right when I fell in with a traveller.

"Q. How were you treated in the house of Noussiram Bey!

"A. Like the lowest animal that crawls. Noussiram Bey, and Ismail and Edigy, *his* sons and *my* cousins, made my life one of misery and

wretchedness. One being only existed there, who sowed the roses of consolation amidst the nettles which stung me—that was Fazry, the beloved daughter of my oppressor—still young, still lovely, still innocent: she said to me, 'Aly, you are unhappy—you are here like a flower in the desert—but I love you.'

"And here *Kara Aly* shed tears.

"Q. At what age did you enter the army? and why did your master make a common soldier of you?

"A. *My* master!—he was *my* master as the wolf is master of the helpless lamb yet unable to run—he was a tyrant! Fazry, dear Fazry, was but fourteen—I was twenty-five: he saw that our hearts beat in unison, and that we were formed for each other. By dint of his influence and his money, which he disbursed right and left for the purpose, I became tied, shackled like a wild beast, and at last he forced me to become a private soldier, as you say. I—I who am his lawful sovereign!

"Q. In what regiment have you served?

"A. In the regiment of dragoons de Nijny

Novogorod. For five years I dealt death amongst the Circassians—my sword has felled more of them than you have hairs on your head, and they were the enemies of your Czar. There should I have remained if peace had not come; for to me war is as delightful as gold is to the miser—I cannot bear the restraint of civil life, and so I went back to see Fazry, the star of my destiny."

The Captain then read to him the following report, which had been transmitted to him from the head-quarters of the regiment in which he stated that he had served:—

"Kara Aly, a Mahometan—private in the regiment of dragoons of Nijny Novogorod. Whenever he was in action, or before the enemy, he conducted himself bravely, and with credit to his character as a Russian soldier; but in garrison he was always insubordinate, and habitually a drunkard. On the 16th of March, 1833, upon the arrival of the regiment at Tiflis, he was punished by order of Lieutenant Kryltsof, for disobedience. The next day he deserted: he was taken at Wladicaucas, and punished again for desertion. He was subsequently taken to

the hospital, from which he escaped, in the presence of the inspector, by jumping from a window: he was, however, some time after again taken at Astracan.

"When he was brought back, and after he had been again flogged, Prince Boralynski, major of the regiment, came into the room where he was, and questioned him as to the manner in which he contrived to effect his escape—the soldiers still guarding the gate. Kara Aly told the Prince how it occurred, pointed out the position of the inspector in the room, and, in suiting his action to his words—or, as the report says, 'adding pantomime to recitation'—he again jumped from the window into the street. The first moment of surprise over, a hue and cry was raised, and a pursuit set on foot; but in vain—he was not to be overtaken. The same night one of the Prince Boralynski's horses was stolen, and two of his orderlies were found murdered.

"Q. Kara Aly, is this report correct?

"A. Yes; I stole the horse, and killed the men.

"Q. What could have induced you to commit this triple crime?—speak the truth.

"A. The truth! my lips are as free from falsehood as the sun is from the blackness of the clouds which momentarily hide his face from us. The reporter of my crime speaks truth—but not all the truth. He does not tell you that, at the moment when I took the horrid resolution to commit the crime with which I am justly charged, my back was reeking with blood from the lashes I had unjustly received. When I escaped from my quarters I hid myself in the stables of Prince Boralynski. I felt sure that nobody would look for me there, and there I remained under the manger. Night came: Iwan and Havrilo, two of the Prince's orderlies, slept in the stable. I hated them both—they were cowards—they had denounced me often to my officers—the night was dark—there was no witness by—there lay a yatagan—I said to myself these are two Giaours—Mahomet will bless me—and I killed them both! Well, then I took the Prince's horse, saddled him, mounted him, and in another hour again breathed the pure air of freedom!

"Q. Where have you been since this event?

"A. In a country that does not belong to your Czar.

"Q. What have you been doing from that time to the present?

"A. That does not concern you. Spare your threats—they will be useless—I shall answer no more questions."

At this period of the examination the Captain Isprauwnik states that he felt himself compelled, in the hope of extracting more information from the prisoner, which might lead to important discoveries, to change the tone and manner of his examination, and that his anxiety to ascertain further particulars induced him to adopt this course, rather than that of punishing the brigand for his insolence. He therefore resumed his questions by asking him how long he had been in Kazan?

"A. I arrived in Kazan in the month of October, 1836. I have plenty of gold and diamonds—there is not a sultan in the world who has finer jewels.

"Q. How did you become possessed of them?

"A. That does not concern *you*—I did not get them in Russia. If you choose to listen you shall hear my history, for it will be a relief to me to unburthen my mind.

"Noussiram Bey, when I went to his house, was in his room with my beautiful Fazry. Have you seen her eyes, black as jet, and brighter than the sun? have you seen her raven locks? have you heard the blessed sound of her sweet voice? If you have, you know that she is worthy of adoration—as a Houri, as the daughter of Mahomet himself!—I have told you I love her; she loves *me* in return—am I not happier than your Czar? When I came into the room Noussiram Bey did not recognize me—Fazry did—yes, she remembered me, although my countenance was changed, and my person altered. I was driven from the house in the spring-time of my life, an unfortunate slave—a victim; I returned in the bright summer of my existence—rich and bold as a Khan of the Tartars should be. 'Kara Aly,' cried Fazry, rushing into my arms, 'my plighted faith is still your own—I am yours eternally!' Noussiram started up. 'Nous-

siram Bey,' said I, looking stedfastly at him, 'prostrate yourself before your master—prostrate yourself before your sovereign. Here, then, is wealth for you;' and I threw him a handful of gold and diamonds. 'There,' said I, 'keep my money, and I will take Fazry: we are quits.' By way of answer, he whistled at me in derision, seized his sabre, and attacked me. Anxious to spare his life, I contented myself with parrying his blows, but, his two hateful sons rushing in to his assistance, life was set against life. Mahomet favoured me, and the three measured their length upon the floor before me. Fazry had fainted the moment her father began the conflict: when they lay dead at my feet I lifted her in my arms to bear her from the scene of bloodshed. In leaving the house I met two of the Bey's servants; one Moussoum, an old comrade and a friend; the other Nadir, my bitter enemy. To the first I said, 'Moussoum, to horse—come with me!' Into the heart of the other I thrust my yatagan, and he fell dead without a groan. Thence did I bear my precious burthen, and, accompanied by Moussoum, fled to the cave of

Mustapha Iblis. Ask Fazry if she has been happy there?"

In pronouncing these words, and, indeed, whenever he referred to Fazry, he shed tears.

"Q. What have you done since!

"A. I accumulated a force, and I made war on your Czar.

"Q. You have assassinated three officers, two civilians of the government, and ten soldiers?

"A. Yes, that is true—I killed them all with my own hand—your Czar employed his soldiers to murder mine—he is the strongest and triumphs—and I am dethroned.

"Q. You rob, you pillage, and levy contributions on the people?

"A. That is true, too. I pillage, because I want clothes, and money, and provisions; the inhabitants have all these, and I have not. But as to theft, you speak falsely if you charge me with theft—Kara Aly knows not how to thieve—he knows how to pillage, and to kill—that is the business of a warrior, of a Khan!"

The Captain then read over to Kara Aly a list of the crimes which had been committed by

his people, the catalogue of which is omitted, as not being interesting to the general reader. They consisted of housebreakings, highway robberies, &c. &c. Kara Aly acknowledged the correctness of the statement, and declared himself the sole author of all the crimes therein enumerated. When the Captain came to the report of Tiedor Trazoff, which I have already submitted to the reader, he smiled.

"Yes," said he, "I have amused myself for the last four months with the proceedings of that hero. I have been close to him—talked to him fifty times—and it was *he* himself who one day in a tavern boasted that he had collected seventeen thousand dollars. I laughed at the cowardly fellow; but I see him here now. The proverb says, despise not even a caterpillar; the time may come when even such a reptile as that may do you harm. Trazoff triumphs to-day—he has his revenge, and we are quits. I never bear malice.

"Q. What was the number of men of whom your band was composed?

"A. Besides the five whom you have arrested, I am the sixth.

"Q. Were you in correspondence with the inhabitants?

"A. No.

"Q. Where have you hidden your treasures?

"A. That is a question which I shall not answer. The day will come when you will be satisfied that my heir will well employ the inheritance he will derive from me.

"Here ended the examination; and the Captain Isprauwnik adds, by way of note, that neither threats nor persuasions, nor privations, nor punishments, could obtain any other results.

(Signed) "JOUTEKOF, Secretary."

We next come to the examination of Moussoum, but as it leads to no very important results, it has been thought only necessary to give a summary of it.

Moussoum is a Tartar, two years older than

Kara Aly, and has been in the service of Noussiram Bey. He admits that he followed Kara Aly, and that he has participated in the robberies and pillagings with which he is charged; but he positively denies that he has ever been guilty of murder. He affirms that the banditti always considered Kara Aly to be the true and legitimate Khan, and Fazry to be his wife. The devotion of Fazry for Kara Aly was unqualified; she loved him sincerely and entirely, and, as he states, never was aware that her father and brother fell by his hand; nor did she know in what country she was actually living. Kara Aly told her that her father and brothers were still living in Kazan, and that she was in the midst of the mountains of Kirgis Taj. Not one of the brigands dared venture to undeceive her, "for," says Moussoum, "Kara Aly had a good yatagan, and a hand ever ready for punishment." Moussoum agrees with Kara Aly as to the number of the band, and equally declares that no sort of understanding existed betweem him and the inhabitants, and that nobody, except their chief, knew where the treasure was con-

cealed. To this statement he has constantly adhered.

Three of the brigands taken on the day of the attack upon the cavern—Kendjibeck, aged 76; Mumag, 24; De Saharin, 20—were natives of Kajsak Kirgis, deserters from the 16th regiment of Oural Cossacks. They state that, having been sent in search of Kara Aly, they had been made prisoners by him, and under those circumstances had consented to serve under him. In all other particulars their depositions are extremely like those of Moussoum.

Ywan Rubtchenko, aged 23 years, Oural Cossack of the 16th regiment, is questioned in a similar manner to the previous prisoners, and gives precisely similar answers; but he states, in addition, that from time to time the Kara Kirgis—that is, the independent Black Kirgis—came to see Kara Aly, and that he was sometimes absent from the cavern ten days. Kara Aly was confronted with Ywan Rubtchenko, denied the whole of the statement, which so alarmed him, that he dared not repeat what he

had said, the truth of which, it must be confessed, none of the others who were accused, in any degree confirmed.

We now come to, perhaps, the most interesting part of this most curious case, and that is the examination of the beautiful Fazry herself.

"Fazry," says the reporter, "is lovely beyond description: her eyes are full of intellect and expression, her features are somewhat strongly developed, which, with her dark complexion, give an additional expression of grief and depression to her fine countenance. She is now about twenty years of age, and professes the Mahometan religion.

The Captain Isprauwnik commenced his examination:—

"Q. Fazry, why have you thus followed the fortunes of the murderer of your father and your brothers?

Fazry replied, bathed in tears, that she was up to the time of her caption ignorant of their fate; but then, raising her beautiful countenance with an air of decision and resolution, she added, "If I *had* known that they were dead,

I should still have remained with Kara Aly; he is so noble, so handsome, and I love him so much. I love him still:—father—brothers—forgive me!" and she again burst into tears.

"Q. And where have you been since you left your father's house?

"A. In the subterranean castle, inherited by Kara Aly from his royal ancestors. It did not contain splendid rooms, like those in my father's house, but Kara Aly was there.

"Q. Are you aware of the robberies which have been committed by Kara Aly?

"A. Robberies!—you speak falsely—Kara Aly is no robber; he made war upon his enemies.

"Q. Did you ever see his subjects?

"A. The wife of a Khan does not degrade herself by looking at his subjects. I saw only five servants, who are now your prisoners of war.

"Q. Do you know where the treasures of Kara Aly are concealed?

"The wife of a Khan does not trouble herself with such matters. He never knew what

want was. Let me see him!—my husband—my master!—and you will see me happy."

"No further discovery was made by Fazry. The interview which she requested with Kara Aly was refused.

"From the examinations of the country people nothing more was elicited calculated to throw any further light upon the subject; but it is generally believed that Kara Aly had no accomplices, and that the Mahometan inhabitants of the district of Zarazeek and the Government of Kazan were in no degree implicated in the crimes committed by him or his followers,

(Signed) "SZATOF, Captain Isprauwnik,
"TRAZOFF, Assessor,
"JOUTKOF, Secretary.

"Dated Dec. 10, 1837,
in the town of Zarajek."

The examinations having been completed, a commission from the criminal tribunal at Kazan was sent to verify them, after which the tribunal on the 21st of December, 1837, pro-

nounced the sentence, which condemned Kara Aly to one hundred lashes of the knout, Moussoum, Kendjibeck, Mumag, Saharin, and Ywan Rubtchenko, twenty-five lashes each, and subsequently to be banished for life to hard labour in the mines of Siberia.

Fazry declared innocent, and immediately set at liberty.

On the fourth of January, 1838, the post or horse (kobilitza) to which the criminals are fastened who are destined to receive the punishment of the knout, was early in the morning erected in the *grande place* of Kazan, and all the people of the town, of the neighbouring villages, and even from the mountains, crowded to this immense square, on the scaffold in the midst of which stood the executioner armed with his knout, and attended by his three assistants, who were selected from amongst the degraded class of dog-killers (hitzel).

At ten o'clock, amidst the murmur of anxiety and impatience which always precedes a melancholy spectacle, the six culprits were brought out.

Kara Aly walked first—his head erect, his eyes bright and fierce, his step firm :—the executioner having taken off his clothes, he permitted him, without a word, without a look, or the slightest demonstration of feeling, to fasten him to the dreadful kobilitza, and when he struck him the first blow with the terrible instrument of punishment, formed of lashes of leather, each lash having at its end an iron hook, Kara Aly flinched not—neither groan nor sigh escaped him, although the executioner continued his horrid duty, interrupted only by periodically taking large bumpers of brandy. The number of blows was anxiously counted by the crowds who surrounded the scaffold, and who were absolutely terrified at what appeared the superhuman fortitude of the suffering victim.

The hundredth blow having plashed into his bleeding back, Kara Aly was loosened from the kobilitza—but the executioner held in his arms only a corpse—Kara Aly was dead !

His five accomplices received their twenty-five lashes each—and, following the example of their leader, uttered no murmur of complaint—after

the punishment their mangled bodies were removed to the hospital, whence, if they recover the effects of the discipline, they will be, according to their sentence, transported to the government mines at Nertchynsk.

The search after the treasures which were unquestionably in Kara Aly's possession in the cavern, has been renewed, but without success. Fazry has remained ever since the execution in a state of stupor, which the faculty are of opinion will settle into melancholy madness; and the Assessor, Trazoff, has been rewarded for his zeal and success by receiving the decoration of the order of St. Anne.

This, perhaps, is one of the most extraordinary cases that ever occurred, or could be expected to occur in times like the present. The whole of the circumstances connected with it—the wholesale murder—the cavern—the concealment—the savage ferocity of the leader—the extraordinary infatuation of the beautiful Fazry—are all characteristics of other and long gone-by days, and all this has happened within the last few months.

Turn we then from this official report of the Russian police, to an official report of the state of English prisons—and, although totally different in its character, we shall there find an instance of callous hardihood and irreclaimable roguery, which we take to be quite as extraordinary in its way as even the more romantic history of Kara Aly.

In the Third Report of Captain Williams, Inspector of prisons in the northern and eastern districts, printed and presented by order of Her Majesty to both Houses of Parliament, we find the following :—

In reporting upon the state of Nottingham borough jail, Captain Williams says :—

"As a proof of the total want of discipline and the mischief of unchecked association, I annex a copy of a paper taken from a most notorious character lying there under sentence of transportation: it was composed by himself, another prisoner acting as his amanuensis, and it is said to contain a real account of his life and depredations.

" My name is Isaac Holden, you very well do know,
And when I was ten years of age a robbing I did go ;
It was out of my mother's box, as you the truth shall hear,
Seven spade-ace guineas I did take, I solemnly declare.

Then to the brick-yards I did go all for to earn my bread,
I had not been there many months before a thought came in my head—
James Gregg he had two ducks, as I very well did know,
Resolved I was to steal them, and have a glorious doo.

The next to Sison I did go in company with three more,
To Sir John Thurrold's orchard, where there was apples galore ;
Seven strike of these apples we stole I do declare,
And for to bring these apples home we stole Abraham Clark's black mare.

It was not long after when a thought came in my head,
That we could rob Bill Barneses shop, so to my pall said,
Theyres a great deal of money all in that shop I know,
I've got a key that will it fit, so come and let us go.

Then when we got into that shop, O how he did but stare,
To see so many halfpence, a bag full I declare ;
The amount of them was £50, and the weight was great you know,
We carried them unto the Whitham, and in we did them throw.

Besides ten pounds in silver my boys we took away,
Which lasted us to spend my boys for many a good day ;
And when it was all gone my lads we went unto our store,
For we knew when that was gone my lads we had got plenty more.

It was about three months after we went into his barn,
There we stole sixteen fine fouls, and thought it was no harm ;
One couple of these fouls we eat, the rest we gave away,
And we thought God would reward us all in a future day.

To Buckminster the next I went apprentice to be bound,
And before I had been there six months I began to look
around ;
It was all at the publick house where I ofttimes used to go,
The landlord he had three fine geese, as you the truth shall
know.

These geese I did condemn to die without the least fear,
And the very first opportunity I shifted them from there ;
Me and my master cooked them, and of them we all did share,
And my master said I was the best lad that ever had been
there.

O then unto the butcher's shop my master did me send
To fetch a leg of mutton to dine him and a friend ;
And when that I had brought it he sent me back again
With the bill and the money to pay all for the same.

She put it in the cupboard where there was plenty more,
O then thinks I unto myself that will add to my store ;
So when she went a milking I was on the look out,
And slily went into the shop and fetched the booty out.

I rob'd my master of two pounds and then I ran away,
To Leicester town I did set off without any more delay,
Twas there I saw a mariene and with him I did list,
I thought I would a soldgier bee, for fear they should me
twist.

And when that I was swore in my boys twas on that very day
I rob'd Mrs. Shipman of five pounds, that was a glorious day ;
We stopt there and spent it and then we marched away,
It was to Woolwich that we went, for there the regiment lay.

I had not joind the regiment long before I was on the look out,
Then I spied a drunken sarjent with his pocket book half out,
I made free for to take it and thought it was no harm,
And it contained 7*l.* 10*s.* and he made a great alarm.

Me and my palls to Greenwich went, being as it was the fair,
There we pickd up a sailor bold that was a sporting there,
We robd him of his bit of blunt, the truth I will declare,
It was but 1*l.* 5*s.*, but it helpt to keep the fair.

I now had left the regiment twelve months or rather more,
Then we robd lady Morgan, as you have heard before,
Of fifty pounds in money, and fifty more in plate,
It was enough I'm sure to buy a small estate.

William Longland he got hanged, and G. Hurst he went for life,
And I have remained a robber all the days of my life ;
Jack Whittaker and Will Fielding from Yorkshire they came,
And whith me and Tom Kirkham did carry on the game.

O then to Grantham Church we went where there was blunt galore,
Three hundred pounds in money we got, and plate value of two more :
O what a row the next morning when the parson found it out,
O yes there was a pretty row, how the parson run about.

Then next we robd a horse-dealer, from Buckminster he came,
He was a swaggering horse-dealer, Bob Bartrum was his name,
We robd him of 100 pounds as from a fair he came,
And put a ball right through his hat when going down the lane.

O then to Cotgrave town I went without any more delay,
I am sure this is a roving blade the natives they did say;
From William Hill of Cotgrave two game fouls I did steal,
And fought the cock all for 5 pounds in a pair of silver heels.

This cock he fought at Suiston, an excellent battle to,
He was as black as jet, which a many people knew;
This cock had not fought long my boys before he won the prize,
But then I fought this cock again and he lost both his eyes.

Then I went to Cotgrave back again without either fear or doubt,
And when sitting in a publick house the constable fetched me out:
They said you have stole two fouls my man we very well do know,
And for the same offence six months to Southwell I did go.

So then I thought unto myself here I will not stay,
Then I steerd my course to Nottingham on an unhappy day;
I now had been in Nottingham about nine month or rather more,
When I went to the horse and trumpet for to pay of a score.

Then as I was a sitting there getting a can of ale,
Who should come in but William Ward and offer two shirts for sale;
He asked me for to buy one, I said it was too good,
He sayd if it will not suit you, you perhaps know who it would.

It was on the forest these shirts were hung to dry,
Some scamping blade there came that way and on them cast
his eye;
One of these shirts I sold Ralph Brough as you do know,
And they belonged to Mr. Mills that lived on the Long Row.

It was a short time after Ralph Brough he pawned the shirt,
And through that very action we both got in the dirt;
William Ward he got transported for seven long years,
And I went to the house of correction, that put away my fears.

Then about five years after for murder I got tried,
For murdering William Greendale the people they did say
Some base man and woman tried to swear my life away,
And since they have not prosperd up to the present day.

When I was ranged at the bar along with Adam Wagg,
Some sayd they will get hanged, and some they will get lagd;
But after all this, my boys, nothing could they doo,
There was a flaw in the inditement, and they had to let us go.

And now I am tried again for a trifling thing you know,
But for it across the erren pond for seven years must go;
It is for an old jacket that is nearly worn out,
But if ever I come back again I will that devil clout."

This *poem* seems *unique;* the spirit in which it is conceived is much the same as that in which Kara Aly's confessions were delivered to the Captain Isprauwnik—and in some parts there is even a similarity of adventure. To find such a document to relieve the ordinary dulness of a parliamentary report is, of itself, quite re-

freshing; and, as affording an authentic *pendant* to the official statements of the Russian police, will, as an illustration of the state of English prisons, be considered, I think, at once amusing and instructive.

ODD PEOPLE.

In some preceding pages we had the pleasure of exhibiting to our readers the vagaries of an exceedingly eccentric family; who, from the singular way in which they carried on the every-day business of life, were known as the "Odd People" at Avignon, about seventy or eighty years ago.

We now propose to exhibit the vagaries of a certain Mr. and Mrs. Deveril (or rather *one* of their vagaries), who had a reputation for eccentricity in the neighbourhood of a flourishing town in a fine midland county—and, for all I know, have still—but, certainly not involving murders, fires, abductions, assassinations, slow poisonings, and sudden deaths; but rather

all sorts of little mischiefs, and *mauvaises plaisanteries* (no pleasantries at all), in which they contrived, and do contrive as I believe, to entangle and *embrangle* their nearest and dearest friends.

This passion for practical jokes upon a great scale, has long been extremely popular and predominant. A noble earl, not many years dead, in order to divert himself and two or three chosen friends

"At another's expense,"

used sometimes to invite to dine with him some six men, each minus an arm or a leg; on another day, half a dozen worthy personages, who were stone deaf; on another, half a dozen others, whose obliquity of vision happened to be exceedingly remarkable. One day six bald men were asked: on another, three men six feet four high, with three men scarcely four feet six; on a third occasion, a neat half-dozen of stutterers; and on a fourth, an equal batch of sufferers under some nervous affection, which induced them to keep winking their eyes and twitching

their noses at each other, during the whole of the repast, perfectly unconscious themselves of the oddity of the proceeding.

About the middle, or perhaps rather an earlier part of the last century, the then Duke of Montague, was as celebrated for this sort of practical playfulness, as in much later days was the eccentric earl to whom allusion has just been made; but as in the cases—let us hope—of all these "mad wags," there were many redeeming qualities about his Grace.

There is a story on record—which, perhaps, our readers may know as well as ourselves—but still it *is* a story, and we question whether anecdotes of such a kind do not, like sound wine, get even better by keeping. Let us hope, as we believe, that the playfulness of buoyant spirits is not incompatible with the strongest feelings of humanity and charity, and that the boisterous ebullitions of youthful extravagance are not to be recorded, in the annals of a man's career, as so many disqualifications from the pursuit of higher and nobler objects in his after life.

For a moment, then, we will postpone Mr. and Mrs. Deveril of Mumjumble Lodge, for the purpose of exhibiting "a frolic" of one of the most frolicsome Dukes that ever drew breath.

Shortly after the Peace of 1748, and shortly before his own death, the Duke had noticed a man, whose air and dress were military—for in those days, most wisely, did men wear the costume of the profession to which they belonged; the latter having evidently suffered either during the late campaign, or the still later period of tranquillity—walking in the Mall of St. James's Park, which although now a desert, and devoted to nobody but passengers making a thoroughfare of the domain from one end of it to the other, was then, as everybody knows, a place of general resort.

What the change of fashion has done much to achieve, and the change of hours even still more, since the Mall was once the favoured and favourite promenade of the *beau monde*, the vivid and tasteful mind of the late Mr. Nash has completed. With his unfailing eye for the picturesque, with his unabating ardour for the

improvement of our metropolis, that ill-used man, to whom London is indebted for Regent Street, a street unrivalled in any European capital—saw in the dirty marsh, tributary in its damps to a stagnant canal, fenced in with unseemly posts, and fed off by dingy cows—an, opportunity of forming a beautiful and attractive place of public healthful resort. Look at it now; let those who recollect what the thing was before—a swamp enclosed by a hideous spiked pailing, protected by what ought to have been a dry ditch, but which was filled with filth and dirt too odious to be mentioned—let those, we say, who recollect it as it was, look at what it is;—one of the most beneficial adornments of our town: and this, (we speak it as we have heard the fact,) the result of some two hours' contemplation of the site, and of a sketch made upon the back of a letter after a deliberation of no longer period.

Well: it was before this alteration by more than seventy-years, that the melancholy man, of whom it is now our business to speak, was seen walking up and down the Mall, apparently

caring for nobody; in fact, seeing nobody; every body, however, seeing *him*, and as he appeared remarkably depressed in spirits, generously resolved rather to laugh at him than otherwise.

This expression brings to mind the saying of a maid-servant, recorded in Mr. Benson Hill's work of *Home Service at Out and Head Quarters*, which we confess made us—why the editorial plural?—made *me* laugh exceedingly. The story is this, as told by Mr. Hill.

"The servant-maid of the house was one of the civilest creatures possible; we liked her, and she soon became attached to us, as what follows will exemplify.

"Letting me in one evening, she said,

"'I beg pardon, sir; but there has been a man after you—on business.'

"'Where from?' says Hill.

"'Carey Street, if you please,' replies Betty.

"'What did he want?' says the artillery officer.

"'Why, of course,' says Betty, blushing a little, and dropping a sort of half-respectful, half-

affectionate courtesy, 'I don't *know*, sir—but —I—was rather frightened about you, sir;' with another kind-hearted sort of glance—'because, sir, I—'

"'Because why?' said Hill.

"'Because, sir,' said the girl, '*he was rather in a red waistcoat than otherwise.*'"

Mr. Hill adds in explanation of the poor girl's notion of the "Little bird with bosom red," that she had been "in our parts," (which, we believe means Bristol,) where the bailiffs, with disinterested benevolence, wear an uniform scarlet waistcoat as a badge, by which debtors may know how to avoid them. However, it turned out that the sweet "Robin," was the servant of a friend of Mr. Hill's, who had sent to bid him to supper. The phrase which hits *us*, is Betty's "rather than otherwise," which having inadvertently adopted it, with respect to the gentleman in the Mall, has brought upon the reader the pleasure of hearing a bit of a book, which he ought to read from beginning to end.

Well—as the Duke of Montague was full of fun—and as nobody, at least of his day, ever

equalled him in practical trickeries; he resolved, having seen this meager-faced, melancholy animal crawling about, to make him a subject for one of his jokes—As the big boy said of the little one at the boarding-school, "hit him again, Bill, he han't got no friends!"—So, the Duke said to himself,—"now all my wig-singeing, nose-blacking exploits, will be completely outdone by the 'rig'—that was the favourite word in the year 1739—I shall run upon this unhappy devil with the tarnished lace."

When a joker wants to joke practically, it adds very much to the point of the jest to select as a victim somebody upon whom the joke will have the most powerful possible effect, and, therefore, the Duke, who was resolved upon his jest, took care to set his emissaries at work, in order to ascertain how he could hit him hardest, and cure him of the Don Quixote like march, which he thought proper to make up and down the park.

His grace's jackal—and where is there a human lion without one?—wriggled and twisted himself about, grinned, showed his teeth, made

himself amiable, and at last, got an opportunity of boring himself out a sort of talking acquaintance with the gaunt hero of the Mall. It turned out that the unhappy man had appropriated the small fortune he had secured with his wife to the purchase of a commission in the army, and had behaved, as they say, "uncommon well" upon several occasions. But what was *he* among so many? And after all his unnoticed—and probably unnoticeable—exertions in destroying his fellow-creatures for the good of society, there came a peace—and the unfortunate gentleman with the grizzly wig, tarnished lace, and somewhat thin-kneed inexpressibles, was considerably the worse for the same; inasmuch as besides the infliction of half-pay, he had, out of his pittance, to support, or endeavour to support a wife, and two fine children, all living and thriving as well as they could at Chesterfield, in Derbyshire—the spire of the church of which town, by some malconformation of the lead wherewith it is covered, would make any man, tee-totaler or not, who looked at it, think that he was not quite right in his vision.

All these embranglements conduced very much to the pleasure which the Duke anticipated in playing his trick upon his new victim —a trick which, be it observed, for the exceedingly high military offices he held, the Duke was, perhaps, the man best calculated in the world to execute. The Duke had taken his measures to ascertain all the facts connected with the object of his joke, whose cognomen in the Mall was "Grizzlewig," and being too good a soldier to think of springing a mine before the train was securely laid, it was not for some days after he had made up his mind to the frolic, that he sent a confidential member of his household to invite old Grizzlewig to dinner; but the mere sending the invitation was nothing —the mad-brained Duke could not obtain all the pleasure he desired from the surprise, which Grizzlewig must inevitably exhibit at the message, unless he himself witnessed the effect; and therefore, this Master-general of the Ordnance, this Knight of the Garter, and Grand Master of the Order of the Bath, who moreover was Master of the Great Wardrobe, and *a Member*

of the College of Physicians, took the trouble to watch his envoy in order to behold the result of his mission.

Poor Grizzlewig was seated, as was his wont after his walk, on one of the now exploded and comfortless seats in the Mall, thinking more of being *in* the King's Bench than *upon* it, when the messenger of the Duke approached him. He addressed him, but was not noticed —he was prepared for insult, and the word Grizzlewig was all he expected to hear; but, upon a gentle repetition of an appeal from his confidential man, the Duke, who was at a convenient distance, saw Grizzlewig start as from a slumber, the moment he understood the nature of the invitation.

The poor gentleman looked astonished—stared about—shook his head as if to rouse himself from a nap, in which he had been favoured with too sweet a dream. But, when awakened to a consciousness of the real state of affairs, his spirits sunk as much as on the first blush of the thing they had risen. "The Duke of Montague," thought he, "is a joker—I am

selected to be his victim." Still, for a park-fed gentleman on half-pay, the opportunity of dining with a nobleman so highly connected and with such power in the army was not to be lost. "Laughed at or not laughed at," said poor Grizzlewig, "I must go;" and although the Duke had, *à la distance*, seen the effect the invitation produced, all that he heard from his messenger was, that the gentleman would be too proud and too happy to dine with his grace the next day, as invited.

Then came a difficulty with our poor friend as to his dress: in these times that point is by no means distressing. The servants who wait upon a company, nowadays, are generally better dressed than the company themselves; and if rank and talent are to give the tone, the higher one looks the worse it is: we see our greatest men in rank, wearing clothes which their "own men" would not condescend to, and talent in the most exalted degree, wrapped in rags, which till now have been appropriated to the scarecrows, whose "danglings" out of doors at night, have been more serviceable to agriculture, than

those of their present wearers appear to have been to *husbandry*, within.

In those days, however, Monmouth-street, now lost to society and history, afforded the temporary means of shining in temporary splendour on the shortest notice. Whether the invited of the Duke availed himself of the opportunity of thus burnishing up for the occasion, we know not, or whether he made a glorious effort at the renovation of his well-known wig,

> "Which smart when fate was kind,
> Toupeed before and bagg'd behind,
> Now, spoil'd of all its jaunty pride,
> Hangs loose and lank on every side,"

history does not record; but what we do know is, that at about three o'clock—late hours for those days—our hero arrived at the Duke of Montague's, and was ushered into his grace's presence, till which moment, I believe, he never was fully satisfied of the reality of the invitation.

Nothing could equal the warmth and amenity of the Duke's reception; in short, it went

beyond the ordinary courtesy and graciousness of a great man to a small one; but in a very few minutes, to poor Grizzlewig's astonishment, the Duke, leaving a much more aristocratic visitor, took him aside, and with an *empressement* which was extremely staggering, said,

"You will, I am sure, excuse me; but—I know it is rather an impertinent question—are you—forgive me—are you conscious of having created a sensation in the heart of any lady who has seen you occasionally, and—"

"Sir?" said the visitor.

"Come, come, come," said the Duke, "don't deny it. No man is blind enough, or dull enough, not to know when and where he has planted his blow; you *must* remember."

"Upon my word, sir," replied the guest, who began to think that his suspicions as to having been invited only to be laughed at were correct, "I know of no such thing!"

"Well," said the Duke, "then *I* must let you into the secret. There *is* a lady—a married woman—I like to be frank—and with a family; but she *has*—you'll say, as I might

perhaps, there is no accounting for tastes—she has set her heart upon meeting you. And I will at once tell you what may, perhaps, diminish your surprise at having received an invitation from a stranger—your accepting which gives me the greatest pleasure—that it was to gratify *her* wish, I sent to beg of you to come to me to-day."

"Sir," said the overwhelmed half-pay officer, "I am confident that your grace would do nothing either to wound my feelings, or degrade me in my own estimation. I, sir, have a wife, and family, dependent on me, to whom I am devotedly attached; the thoughts which your grace's observations would naturally inspire, never enter my mind; I have but one hope, one wish, in the world, and that is centred in my family. I have—"

"Ay, ay," interrupted the Duke, "I admire your feelings. I respect your affection for your family; but this introduction, this acquaintance, need not at all interfere with those, now we are in London."

"Yes, sir," said the half-pay captain,

"I am — in hopes of getting employed — else—"

"Ah," said the Duke, "I never talk of business here; as for *that* we must take some other time to discuss it. I merely speak of this *affaire de cœur*, and you must let me have *my* way; if the lady is exceedingly disagreeable, turn her off and break her heart; but I do assure you, upon my honour, that her attachment to you is something so romantic, that I could not resist the opportunity of bringing you together."

"Sir," said the officer, "I—really—but—"

"I tell you nothing but truth," said the Duke, "wait and see how much it will be for your advantage."

Dinner was announced: no lady appeared, but when the *battants* were thrown open, and the Duke, and our poor friend Grizzlewig, of the park, entered the dining-room, judge the half-pay officer's surprise, when he beheld already seated at the table his own wife and his two darling children.

"There," said his Grace, "that is the lady who has the extraordinary prepossession in your

favour, and two younger ones, not much behind her in affection."

It is impossible to describe the feelings of the little party.

"Come," said the Duke, "sit down, sit down, and let us dine; you shall talk afterwards, and explain all this to each other, and whatever may be wanting in the narrative I hope to be able to furnish."

The officer's wife, although prepared for what was to happen, and therefore not so completely taken aback as her husband, could scarcely support herself, while the two children, unfettered and unrestrained by the laws of etiquette, ran to their astonished father, and clung round him, in all the warmth of youthful affection.

The course of the Duke's proceeding had been, as soon as he had ascertained the merits and claims of his guest, to trace out the residence of his lady and the children, and to send a trusty person down to her, for the purpose of bringing them up to town; at the same time preventing the possibility of her communicating the history to her husband.

To describe the astonishment, the anxiety, the agitation, of the poor dear Grizzlewig, when he found himself all at once thus domesticated, as it were in the house of one of the magnates of the land, would be impossible. The Duke had invited but two friends to witness the scene, which was heightened in its effect, by his placing the children one on either side of him, and treating them with every kindness and attention.

"Come," said his Grace, "let us drink wine together; let us be happy; take no thought of yesterday, my good sir, nor of to-morrow; suffice it to say, that here we are met, and may often meet again."

All these attempts to compose and assure his grace's visitors were unavailing, except as far as the younger ones were concerned, who appeared exceedingly well satisfied to take "the goods the gods provide;" and, without comprehending the extent of the kindness with which they found themselves treated, naturally followed the advice which the noble lord had offered to their parents.

While dinner was in progress the Duke got on with his guests tolerably well; but he anticipated the awkwardness which must ensue after the servants had left the room and the party was left as it were to itself, although the presence of the two guests, gentlemen who were in the habit of partaking of his grace's hospitality, was purposely secured, in order to prevent the expression of surprise and gratitude of the strangers, which however much excited and created by what had already passed, were destined to receive a new stimulus by a sequel to the frolic extant, as far as it had already gone.

Dinner was scarcely ended, and nothing like the possibility of inquiry or explanation had been permitted to occur, when the Duke's attorney—his *homme d'affaires*, the defender of his rights, and the champion of his wrongs—was announced: a nice, good, smug-looking "gent," who was welcomed by the Duke, and placed next to the elder daughter of poor dear Grizzlewig, who was, to all appearance, still in a state, not exactly of somnambulism, for he

seemed rivetted to his seat by astonishment, but of somnolency; feeling and thinking, even up to the last moment, that all the passing events were the mere fancies of a vision; being himself constantly hindered from saying any thing upon the subject, by the admirable tact of the Duke, who kept his retainers always ready to start some new topic of conversation, so as to baffle any effort of the astonished half-pay officer to lead to the point by which his whole mind was occupied.

The joke, however, as we have just hinted, was not at its height; for after some preliminary observations from the noble host, his grace addressing himself to the attorney, inquired whether he had "brought it with him;" an inquiry which was very respectfully answered in the affirmative.

"Then," said the Duke, "we had better send for pen and ink, and proceed to business without delay."

Whereupon the half-pay officer gave his wife a family look, as much as to say, that he thought they ought to retire; but the diffidence of the

lady prevented her taking any decisive step, and she preferred risking the passive impropriety of staying where she was, to the active measure of quitting the room, ignorant as she was of the ways of the house, not only in the moral, but in the literal and mechanical sense of the words, and wholly at a loss whither she was to go if she ventured to move from where she was.

The Duke was too much a man of the world not to see how extremely uncomfortable his guests were becoming, and how well his frolic was "progressing"—it pleased him mightily, and his pleasure was considerably heightened, when the attorney, going close to his chair, began in a low voice, reciting some part of the bond or deed, or whatever it was, which his noble client was about to execute; during which ceremony, his grace kept his eyes so constantly fixed upon his embarrassed visitors, as to make them exactly as he hoped and wished, perfectly miserable.

"You had better read it out," said the Duke; "it is by no means a mark of good-breeding to

whisper before one's visitors—people always take things to themselves; and as they *are* here—"

"My Lord Duke," said the officer, in a perfect agony of confusion, "pray permit us to quit the room—I am quite conscious of the intrusion, but really—I—my love—let us retire," added he to his wife.

"Stay where you are, my good sir," said the Duke; "you have often heard of my frolics—I like a joke, and I mean to enjoy one to-day, and at your expense."

The unfortunate gentleman began to think that the Duke was a most barbarous and unprincipled person, who could take such pains as he evidently had done, to put him and his family in a most unpleasant position. His wife, however, seemed better contented with the course affairs were taking, and made no effort to obey her lord and master's mandate for retreat.

"Read, sir, read," said the Duke to the attorney, who accordingly began in an audible voice, and with good emphasis, to recite the

contents and conditions of the deed which he held in his hand, and which, in its recital, caused the most extraordinary emotions on the part of the half-pay officer and his wife that can be imagined, until by the time it was concluded, they were both drowned in tears. The husband, supporting his wife's head upon his palpitating breast, and the two children clinging round them, crying with all their hearts and souls without knowing why, except that their fond parents had set them the example.

By the deed, which they had just heard with such surprise and emotion, the Duke settled upon the worthy distressed persons before him, an annuity which afforded them a competency; and so secured, as regarded survivorship, that the two children who were yet unconscious of their change of fortune, must eventually reap the benefit thus munificently bestowed on their father and mother.

The scene which followed is one which cannot be described, and which was so embarrassing to the noble donor, that he broke it up by announcing, himself, that coffee was ready, and in

return for the acknowledgments and fervent expressions of gratitude on the part of the recipients, merely entreating them to say nothing about it; declaring upon his honour, that if he could have found a more agreeable or satisfactory way of employing either his time or his money, he should not have played them such a trick.

We presume there scarcely exists a human being so squeamish or fastidious as to find fault with a practical joke, qualified and characterized as this was. Every man has a right to do good after his own fancy; and if he can so contrive as to make his benevolence to others, produce amusement to himself, nobody surely ought to object to the *modus operandi.*

Now, as to the Deverils of Mumjumble Lodge —they were people who having no right whatever by birth, or any thing else except an excellent disposition to do no harm, enjoyed the greatest possible satisfaction in placing people in the most unsatisfactory positions; always keeping to themselves the consolatory consciousness that the temporary embarrassments of

their guests would, like our dear Duke of Montague's last frolic, turn out eventually well.

Mumjumble Lodge, or Hall—it was called both—was one of the most charming chintz houses in England: there was neither silk nor satin, nor velvet nor gold to be found in its whole construction, composition, or adornment; there were no splendid couches taboo'd against the reception of wearied feet; no costly curtains that required cottoning up; no gorgeous chairs with high backs and hard bottoms: all was ease and comfort. The large and downy sofas and ottomans seemed to ask to be lounged or lolled upon; tables of all sorts and sizes, covered with books and drawings, prints, and ten thousand little useless necessaries of life, which it would perhaps tire the reader to enumerate, crowded the rooms; all, in fact, conspired to give the visitor the most perfect idea, that every thing in and about the hall or the lodge (as the case may be) was snug and comfortable in the highest degree.

As far as regarded the diurnal and nocturnal proceedings, it was literally Liberty Hall.

Breakfast waited for nobody, nor did any body wait for breakfast. The first three or four who came down, commenced operations, which were continued as long as any yet lingered lazily behind; a dozen small equipages graced the board, so that the new comers, as they appeared, established their own independent little tea-manufactories, "all hot," or, if any of them preferred it, they might breakfast in their own apartment. After breakfast every body was left to follow his own inclinations. Luncheon for those who took it, reassembled the community, which afterwards spread and scattered itself in parties, or *têtes-à-têtes*, in walks, or drives, or rides. There was good shooting for the sportsman, admirable fishing for the angler, a lovely country for excursions; old castles and high rocks to be surveyed, and a gay watering-place, within five miles, where the *fa niente* portion of the party might lounge in bazaars, or pace the pier, inhaling the fresh breezes from the ocean, and laugh immoderately at the pallid passengers "just arrived from London" by the steam-packets. In fact, the *agrémens* were innumer-

able; and to crown all, Deveril's cook was a *cordon bleu*, and such a *chef*, as seldom falls to the lot of a commoner, who is not a *millionnaire*, and who neither apes the manners of his superiors, nor aims at being their associate. In fact, Deveril was a fine specimen of a breed unknown out of our own dear happy England, a healthy, wealthy, honourable, middle-class gentleman, rich in the proceeds of his late father's mercantile success, achieved by unwearying industry, and incorruptible honesty.

Deveril had been solicited to stand for the county in which he lived, and must have succeeded had he stood; but no, "I can do no good in Parliament," said he, "except by my vote; any other man of our party can do that business as well as myself. If I could aid the cause by my eloquence, I would sacrifice every thing to be of service—I can't; choose an abler man, and I will support you in your efforts; but for the mere sake of crying aye, or no, or walking out or staying in, I cannot consent to forego my home and all its charms, and exchange the society of a family I love, and

friends I esteem, for the murky atmosphere of the House of Commons; for which, being able neither to speak like an orator, roar like a bull, nor crow like a cock, I do not think I have any one earthly qualification, except," added he, "a 'shocking bad hat'"—a saying founded most likely upon an observation made by a noble duke, who shall be nameless, who, after visiting for the first time the House of Commons first returned after the passing of the Reform Bill, said that he never had seen such a collection of bad hats in any one place, at any one time before.

Mrs. Deveril was a fit help-meet for her good-natured ever-laughing spouse. He laughed incessantly—she only periodically; but when any thing amused them particularly their sympathy was absolutely boisterous; and this invariably happened whenever any of the curiously-contrived embarrassments for which they were so famous, turned out to their entire satisfaction.

The last feat they undertook to perform, it must be owned, appeared even to themselves a somewhat hazardous enterprize, although they

called into council a constant visitor at their house, who was considered not only by themselves, but by the establishment generally, as one of the family, possessing a disposition exceedingly like those of his intimate friends. *He* even shook his head doubtingly, but Mrs. Deveril, who, perhaps, considering the nature of the experiment, was the best judge of the three persons concerned, gave it as her decided opinion that they should succeed.

It must be known that amongst the regular periodical guests at Mumjumble Hall, there was a certain Mr. Blazenton, a gentleman of some sixty years of age, who, having in early life run the round of the gay world, and launched into every fashionable and unfashionable dissipation, led his wife, a lady of considerable beauty and various accomplishments, what may be called a "catanddogical" kind of life, which was terminated by a separation mutually agreed to, on the ground of incompatibility of temper.

This severment had occurred some twenty years before the annual visit of Mr. Blazenton to the Deverils, which is here recorded; and to

see and hear that respectable gentleman at that period, to listen to his misanthropic denunciations of the world's vices and follies, in which he had so long and extensively revelled, nobody certainly would have imagined him to have been the person whom he then so very little resembled.

"Why," said he one day to Captain Gossamer, the friend of the family in question, "you seem to be always here, eh? Strange infatuation on both sides!—what—never knew a family bodkin turn out well, eh?—juxtaposition—constant intercourse—however Deveril may do as he likes, eh? and so he does, and the consequence is, his house is full of folly and frivolity all the year, eh?—what—don't you see?"

"I see nothing, my dear sir," said the Captain, "but what is particularly agreeable, and the more agreeable to *me*, because the mode of living and passing our time here, is quite out of the ordinary jogtrot routine of society.—Mumjumble Hall is proverbially the receptacle and rendezvous of genius and talent."

"Genius and talent, eh?" said Blazenton. "Oh, that's it!—what?"

"The best painters, the first musicians, the leading singers," said Gossamer, "are alternately, and sometimes altogether, among the guests, blended with sound lawyers, orthodox divines, eminent physicians, men of letters, and men of science."

"And a pretty hash it is," said Blazenton, "eh? The

> "'Priest calls the lawyer a cheat,
> The lawyer beknaves the divine.'

The artists hate one another; the singers detest the players; and the men of science despise them all—what? The combination produces all sorts of ill-feeling; and while they are gobbling up Deveril's dinner, and grinning to make believe they are delighted, they are, one and all of them, collecting materials for the purpose of ridiculing and laughing at him the moment they leave the house. What? eh! don't I know the world? eh! I think I do."

"Still it is exceedingly gay," said the Captain.

"Gaiety!" said Blazenton, "which reminds me of the proverbial constitution of Dover Court in Essex, made up of all talkers and no hearers. I am sure, in the drawing-room in the evening, the clatter is worse than the rattle-traps of a cotton-mill—what? eh! every body gabble, gabble, gabble, and not a soul amongst them listening—what?"

"But as far as *that* goes," said Captain Gossamer, "society has always been much the same."

"No—no," said Blazenton, "it was better in my earlier days, eh! don't you see?—what?—quite as gay—gayer intellectually speaking, but not so noisy."

"Was there more sincerity at that period?" said Gossamer.

"Why," said Blazenton, "no; much the same for *that*, eh! but the style of things is changed—the world is over-educated—the present race of men, women, and children are all smatterers—every body wants to be somebody, every body you meet has written a book—the women are all philosophers, and the little chil-

dren are all wonders—pigs with six legs, eh! what? They ought to be born like so many Cerberuses, with three heads apiece, to bear the cramming their poor little noddles are destined to undergo. Eh! what?"

"Still," said the Captain, "whatever may be the faults of society generally, I think the *mélange* which one finds here extremely agreeable."

"*Mélange*," said Blazenton with a look of scorn, "a badly-assorted well-dressed mob, eh!"

"That is just what our host and hostess like," replied the Captain.

"Well," said the old gentleman, "*my* day is past for all this racket and hubbub. I have, however, one consolation, I can always shut myself up in my own room, eh! what? That is fortunately out of squalling-distance; so when the concert begins, up I go—"

"Not just now, my dear sir," said Deveril, who at that moment joined the disputing parties in the flower-garden, where the debate was passing. "We have got a capital joke on the

tapis for to-day: an elderly lady has just arrived to stay with us for a fortnight, who has been separated from her husband many years; we also expect *him*, the indiscretions and singularities of whose youth, were the causes of the division of their interests; they have not met for nearly a quarter of a century, and Mrs. Deveril and I mean to bring them into each other's company, the moment the opportunity presents itself."

"A somewhat desperate undertaking," said Gossamer, "oil and vinegar in the same bottle —a match in a powder magazine."

"Oh, never mind," said Deveril, "I shall leave my better-half to manage matters; women understand each other, and it will be capital fun; because, if the scheme fails, the parted turtles will be no worse off than they are now; and if it succeeds—"

"Ah," said Blazenton, "you are very droll creatures, you and your wife. Odd people, as the world calls you."

"No, my dear sir," said Deveril, "our ex-

pected guests are at present the *odd* people, and *we* wish to unite them."

"Well," said Blazenton, "as I have no turn for that sort of amusement, and have lived long enough to know that meddling or mischief-making between men and their wives is seldom successful, and never satisfactory, I shall retire; eh!—what?—don't you see?—I'm off."

"Stay five minutes," said Gossamer.

"No, no," replied Blazenton, "you are very comical, entertaining gentlemen, and I dare say you will be very much diverted; but I shall take a walk, and leave you to your own inventions."

Saying which, the veteran *roué* struck into one of the clematis-covered *tonnelles*, and speedily disappeared.

"And a pretty business you have made of it, my dear Harry," said Mrs. Deveril, who had, in approaching, heard her husband confiding the nature of their new scheme to Blazenton.

"Pretty business—how, Mrs. Deveril—how?" said the enthusiastic master of the revels.

"Why," said the fun-loving Fanny, "you have been telling him that his wife has actually arrived."

"*His* wife," said the gallant Bodkin—an appellation we have adopted from Blazenton's reading for a third person in a domestic party, whereof two are males.

"To be sure," said Mrs. Deveril, "didn't you know that Blazenton and his long-lost spouse are the couple whom we mean to bring together before dinner by way of joke?"

"Don't you see?" said Deveril.

"I do," replied Gossamer, "but I never had an idea that he—nevertheless not a syllable has escaped either of us, that could give him a notion that *he* was to be victimised."

"So much the better," said the lady.

"And, I am sure," said Deveril, "the little I said upon the subject never awakened the slightest suspicion that he was to act a part in the play."

"Now then," said the lively Mrs. Deveril, "*your* business will be to take care of the man—to watch your opportunities, and, as Deveril

says about horse-racing, bring him to the post in time. *I* will take charge of the lady, who is now coming towards us. I will keep her in a little interesting conversation, till you have secured the other performer in this most extraordinary scene."

"And I," said Deveril, "had better be off, in accordance with your proposition;—so come along, Gossamer."

"Yes," said the Captain, "I am too happy; and when we get them together we must hide ourselves behind those shrubs, and listen to what passes between them."

"Delightful!" said Deveril. "There is nothing like a practical joke after all—come, come along."

And so away went these two mischief-makers, leaving Mrs. Deveril to encounter her unsuspecting friend, Mrs. Blazenton.

Mrs. Blazenton was about—nobody knows exactly a lady's age, and as a noble lady once told us, with a gravity which was charmingly set off by her own beauty, "the peerage (the only authentic record of such events as the births,

deaths, and marriages of the *élite*) is always wrong as to women"—but Mrs. Blazenton was what was called a lady of a certain time of life; which, as we have already hinted, is an extremely uncertain one. She might, perhaps, if ladies ever live so long (which we doubt), be about fifty-two or three; but she was very handsome; her eyes were sparkling bright; her cheeks like roses, and her lips like cherries. Her figure looked perfect; and, according to the testimony of an Irish maid, whom she retained in her service, and who made no secret of her mistress's perfections, was most symmetrical.

Blazenton and she had married, they scarcely knew why. Reason, perhaps, has little to do with that sort of passionate affection, which, in the days of real love, governed and controlled the juvenile branches of society; but which, according to Blazenton's present doctrine, was latterly exploded, or rather converted by a most degrading process, into the cold calculation of "ways and means." We have just seen that the "roseate bands," which sound so harmo-

niously and so hymeneally, had not been sufficiently strong to confine the once-devoted husband within the matrimonial tether; and that dissipation—not, however, more than venial—had so unsettled the establishment, that they parted; Mrs. Blazenton being, at the moment at which she joined Mrs. Deveril in the garden, as agreeable and as handsome—barring just merely the bloom of youth—as ever she had been in her life.

"Dear Mrs. Deveril," said the bright-eyed lady, "do *you* know that amongst the many people here, I know so few, from having lived abroad so long, that I really have hunted you down in order to find an agreeable companion."

"I am too happy," said Mrs. Deveril, "to find you driven to a measure so agreeable to *me*."

"Ah, Mrs. Deveril," said the lady, "you are too kind—too good, even to seem pleased with the society of a person of my time of life."

"Time of life!" said Mrs. Deveril, "my dear friend, with wit and charms like yours—with

manners so fascinating, and a mind so well stored, there is no difference in times of life."

"Ah," replied Mrs. Blazenton, "you know how to flatter; but to tell you the truth, however 'pleasing 'tis to please,' I am quite weary of what is called the world; and I should have been ten times happier when I arrived here, to have found you and Mr. Deveril alone, or but one or two dear and affectionate friends. Indeed, indeed, Mrs. Deveril, every thing seems changed since I was a girl. In those days, there was a respectful attention on the part of the men one met in society—something like a devotion; but now—no—they look at one coldly, almost scornfully, and, absorbed either in gambling, smoking, steeple-hunting, or politics, give themselves no trouble about us. Look at their dancing! I remember when, in the buoyancy of my young spirits, I loved a ball, not only for the agreeable associations of the re-union, but for the mere practical pleasure of dancing. Look at the listless pale-faced creatures who now seem as if they were absolutely conferring a favour upon their partners, not by dancing with

them, but by walking through the figures of a quadrille, the man who really does dance being an object of universal ridicule. Now this I hate —it is a falling off."

"Well," said Mrs. Deveril, "I agree with you there—but this evening, perhaps, we may find you some sprightlier *cavaliers*."

"Oh," said Mrs. Blazenton, "that is all past with me; of course I never dance now. No, I prefer that, which I know, when I become familiarized with you I can always have here—I mean the conversation of the *beaux esprits*, and the advantage of an intercourse with the most distinguished men of the day in their various ways."

"I hope you will not find yourself disappointed," said Mrs. Deveril, "for besides some singers and musicians, some artists, and a lawyer or two, we have eight or nine *ologists* of different sorts staying with us at present."

"I know I shall be happier here than any where else," said Mrs. Blazenton. "I feel that a kind of sympathy exists between us—I am *so* much obliged by your invitation—any thing

like a home is so delightful, after a wandering continental life. Mrs. Deveril," added she, more seriously "if I had fortunately married a man who could have appreciated my sentiments, and understood my feelings, we both might have been happy; but fate decreed it otherwise, and, without any serious fault on either side, I hope —as you know, we have been separated for four-and-twenty years. I went to live with an amiable and excellent aunt of mine, who loved me as if I had been her daughter, but six years since she died; and, I assure you, the loss of her so completely changed my character, that all those worldly pleasures as they are called, with which I was formerly enchanted, fail in their attractions, and all I seek is a peaceable and quiet intercourse with people of sense and talent."

"I am delighted to think," said Mrs. Deveril, "that we are likely to be able to gratify your wishes; you will here find a constant opportunity of conversing with men of the world—men who think—men who, in fact, if the word

did not sound too fine for the nineteenth century, are really and truly philosophers."

"Those *are* the people with whom I *do* like to converse," said Mrs. Blazenton.

"Especially," continued Mrs. Deveril, "one who, having known the gay world, and lived in it, perhaps not profitably, has learned by experience to appreciate properly its follies and vanities—"

"Exactly," said Mrs. Blazenton; "for there, and upon those points, we must agree; and do you know, my dear Mrs. Deveril, no sort of argument delights me so much as one in which there is no difference of opinion."

"I see one of our *savans*," said Mrs. Deveril, "coming up the next walk, who I am sure will suit you; you had better meet without any formal introduction—so I shall run away."

And run away the fair practical joker did—and walk into the presence of his long-separated wife did Mr. Blazenton.

"Gracious mercy!" said Mrs. Blazenton. "This philosopher must be my husband!—he is certainly grown older. Where are the curls

that clustered over his forehead?—his hair is gray—he stoops a little. Oh dear! and look at the furrows in his cheeks!—What does it mean? —it is—Mr. Blazenton?"

"I know that voice," said Blazenton, putting his hand verandah-wise over his eyelids. "Why, Mrs. Blazenton! is that *you?*"

And here, *à propos de bottes*, I cannot refrain from telling a story, which I know to be true (and old into the bargain), but which I am not sure has ever been printed; if it have, it cannot be helped—if it have not, so much the better; it is a story of the oldest Grimaldi, the first of the race, not of the illustrious, but the clownish race of the Grimaldis; the father of that Grimaldi who certainly was the Garrick of pantomime:—which story is simply this:

Grimaldi and his wife were occasionally, as is the case in the best-regulated families, in the habit of quarrelling; aud during the paroxysms of domestic turmoils—*civil* wars they could scarcely be called—matters ran very high indeed, until at length their feuds assumed a very serious aspect; and after communing together upon

their miserable state of "incompatibility of temper," like that of Mr. and Mrs. Blazenton, they resolved to destroy themselves, as the only certain rescue from their most miserable condition.

In accordance with this most extraordinary resolution, Mr. Grimaldi proceeded to an apothecary's shop in the neighbourhood, and asked for an ounce of arsenic "to poison de rats." The "culler of simples" obsequiously bowed, and made up the little packet with a dexterity almost marvellous to the uninitiated; and then with a twist of the twine and a little "snick" upon something which is invariably to be found in shops of all sorts, for the purpose of cutting the connexion between the outgoing parcel and a rolling thing overhead, delivered to the devoted clown the dose that he trusted would emancipate him from all worldly ills.

Firm to their purpose, the illustrious Punch and Judy swallowed in tumblers of water, each a moiety of the deadly "drink," and then embracing, retired, one to their hymeneal bed in the bedroom, and the other to a sofa in the sitting-

room—both rooms communicating—the door between them being left open.

The pair of suicides lay down, tears filling their eyes; a long and solemn pause ensued—no sound of groans, no sigh of anguish was heard—all was still as night. At last, wearied out with expectation, Grimaldi raised his head from the pillow, and in the deepest possible tone of voice called out,

"Mrs. Grimaldi, are *you* dead, my love?"

Upon which Mrs. Grimaldi, in the highest possible squeak, replied,

"No, Mr. Grimaldi."

The rejoinder sounded something like "Dom;" what it meant, the imagination of the delicate reader may supply.

At the end of another half-hour, it became Mrs. Grimaldi's turn to be anxious as to the success of the potion, and *she*, hearing nothing in the next room, raised herself in the bed, and said in her squeak,

"Mr. Grimaldi, my dear, are *you* dead?"

To which the gruff reply was,

"No, Mrs. Grimaldi."

And for two hours these questions and answers

went on periodically; till at last, the lady's turn coming again, she repeated the inquiry in a somewhat more excited and exalted tone, and almost screamed out,

"Mr. Grimaldi, my love, are you *not* dead?"

"No, my dear," said Grimaldi, "I am not; nor do I think I can die to-night onless it be of starvation. Mistress Grimaldi; get op out of de bed and see for some supper, for I am dom hongry."

So ended this else fatal performance. The apothecary, who had heard of the perpetual bickerings of Punch and Judy in their *ménage*, having prudentially given him a small parcel of magnesia, which the unhappy pair divided between them.

Who that had seen that poor man, working his legs and arms, his mouth and nose, and every limb, joint, and member, to be comical the night before, would have supposed that at home he was so wretched? But so goes the world, and even the serious Punches and Judies of tragedy,

"Who strut and fret their hour on the stage,"

are all liable to the same domestic miseries, the

same irritations and altercations; always, however, observing that theatrical men who are funniest before the public, are generally the most wretched and unhappy in their domestic lives.

However, *revenons à nos moutons*, the extraordinarily brought-together Mr. and Mrs. Blazenton.

"Is that really *you*, Mr. Blazenton?" said the lady. "Ah! what *can* bring you here? don't you recognise me?"

"Yes," said Blazenton; "eh! what?—don't you see?—yes, it *is* you; but what on earth brings *you* here if you come to that?"

"Chance," said the lady; "for I certainly did not expect to find *you;* but, upon my word, Mr. Blazenton, however much surprised, I am not otherwise moved by the meeting. They tell me, for I hear of you sometimes, that you have turned philosopher and cynic, and all that sort of thing."

"Why," said Blazenton, considerably staggered by the appearance of what it was generally considered he did *not* think his better half, "I—

eh! don't you see?—don't you know, eh! what? —I don't know what you mean by cynic and philosopher; but, ma'am, if you mean to say I think ill of the world, having gained knowledge by experience, and look back with regret upon the time which I have so ill employed, I am both."

"How do you mean ill-employed?" said Mrs. Blazenton; and the extraordinary part of this meeting was, that which really and truly involved the philosophical manner in which it was conducted; for even the sudden surprise of the *rencontre*, which might naturally have been supposed to upset both parties, seemed to have no kind of effect whatever upon them, but on the contrary, appeared to be no surprise at all.

"Ill-employed!" said Blazenton; "look to your own conduct, ma'am."

"Oh!" said the lady, "you are going to scold; we have met oddly, unexpectedly, and accidentally, do not let us make a scene for the amusement of these 'Odd People,' who I have no doubt have brought us together for the purpose of making fun for somebody."

"Ah!" said Blazenton, not looking at her,

"I believe, ma'am, you are right, eh! what?——don't you see?—yes, right,—our meeting is odd; premeditated; we will beat them at their own game, ma'am, we will *not* make a scene, no; we will speak only of the amusements of the House that are going on; don't let us refer to past grievances."

"Grievances!" said Mrs. Blazenton. "No; I have no wish to recur to those; but still, as we *are* here, and have met so strangely, tell me plainly, what good did you ever get by frittering away your money amongst those women of fashion, when gambling was in vogue, and when Lady—"

"Stop, stop," said Blazenton; "name no names."

"Did you ever get paid?" said Mrs. Blazenton.

"Not mercenarily, in money, ma'am," said Blazenton.

"Don't pique yourself on *that*," said the lady. "As the priest said to the culprit, who on his way to the Place de Grève, in company with a party of traitors, endeavoured to establish a

reputation quite of another character, '*Ce n'est pas le moment pour la vanité.*'"

"Vanity! No," said Blazenton; "but look at yourself. What do you think of those dukes, and marquises, and earls, and viscounts, all the way down to the last and lowest of the modern pitchforks; what would they have cared for you, if it hadn't been for your agreeable *cercle*, your *petits soupers*, and all the rest of it; what do *you* mean by vanity? do you think that *you* were the object of their admiration?"

"Come, come, Mr. Blazenton," said the lady, getting more and more animated; "when was you ever so happy as when a great long-legged lordling did you the honour to borrow enough money without security, to buy a troop in a hussar regiment, because you were sure of having him always at dinner whenever you chose, in order to astonish your city friends?"

"Ah!" said Blazenton, "that would never have succeeded if we had known in those days that the 'cracks' were to be sent to India; but that's nothing."

"And then think of the way, Mr. Blazenton,

in which you used to abandon my society for that of other women," said the lady, who, from at first not meaning to say a word about any thing connected with old reminiscences, felt the spirit stirring within her to recur to all her former wrongs.

"Other women?" said Blazenton.

"Yes—yes," sobbed Mrs. Blazenton, "and are still—still devoted to—"

"Me?" said Blazenton. "No—no—all those follies are over now. I live calmly, quietly, and under the advice of my worthy physician, an Irish practitioner, look after my health and stick to that, eh!—don't you see?"

"And," said Mrs. Blazenton; "—indeed, indeed and in truth, Mr. Blazenton; how strange it seems that we should meet in this way. Do *you* know that you are looking wonderfully well?"

"Do you think so?" said Blazenton; "eh—ah—well—umph—upon my life—Maria, I mean—yes—Mrs. Blazenton—umph—eh—I think—eh—*you* are very little altered—eh?—"

"Me!" said the lady. "My dear Mr. Bla-

zenton, I am so changed that I am absolutely afraid to look in my glass."

"Ah, I don't see that," said Blazenton. "My course of life is all changed. People come to dine with me, but they fly off either to the House of Commons, or to the Opera, or to parties—my old friends have all died, my new friends are of another school; suppers are out of fashion—eh, well. I don't care for clubs, I stay at home, and then—what?—eh; I am alone—I try to read, but I can't, and I go to sleep. What? as I say to myself—I have outlived my compeers; I have made no new friends. Now what is life worth under such circumstances, eh? It is *that*, I suppose, which has made me a cynic."

"Why," said Mrs. Blazenton, "life under such circumstances, certainly is a burden; and what is *my* life, Mr. Blazenton? There I was, with a crowd of devoted *cavaliers* at my feet; I treated them like slaves and they obeyed; my suppers after the Opera were perfect; my excursions up the river were puffed and praised in the papers; my balls were charming, and here,—what am I *now?*"

"Ah," said Blazenton;—"eh—what—that's all; what a couple of fools we have been. If we had lived as we ought to have lived, and not been so uncommonly squeamish—eh—what?—both of us in the wrong, we need not have been wandering about alone, and shut out—eh, don't you see?—for the last twenty years."

"Ah," said Mrs. Blazenton; "if we could have felt *that*, ten or fifteen years ago,—how much more does it tell upon us as we are now!"

"Yes, Mrs. Blazenton," said the husband; "it is painful to have no home."

"And really," said Mrs. Blazenton; "having nobody who cares for one."

"I might as well be an old bachelor," said Blazenton.

"And I," said the lady, "an old maid."

"We might have had a family," said Blazenton, half-crying.

"Dear children, who would have engrossed our cares, and repaid our toils for their good," said Mrs. Blazenton, crying outright.

"Yes, dear little children, who would have

handed us down to posterity, Mrs. Blazenton," said he; "instead of which, we have nobody; not a human being interested about us. I declare to you our sufferings are great, Mrs. Blazenton."

"Yes, Mr. Blazenton," said Mrs. Blazenton; "and very much alike in their character."

"Ma'am," said Mr. Blazenton; "eh, what?"

"Sir," said Mrs. Blazenton.

"Ought we not to try," said he, "to alleviate our sufferings by sharing them—eh? don't ye see!"

"What on earth do you mean, Mr. Blazenton!" said the lady.

"Perhaps we are—eh—older we know we are than when we parted,—eh—what?" said Blazenton; "perhaps we are—eh—"

"—— Wiser, Mr. Blazenton," said his wife. "If we are, why shouldn't we forget the past, and consider all the injuries we have inflicted on each other as mere weaknesses."

"Yes," said Blazenton, "weaknesses incidental to humanity."

"If we do *that*," said Mrs. Blazenton, "we must endeavour, if possible, to render our-

selves worthy of each other's esteem for the future."

"With all my heart, Maria," said Blazenton, his eyes becoming somewhat suffused with tears, called up, perhaps, by recollections of other days of folly, or by the anticipation of those of atonement. "Yes, with all my heart; by affection, by tenderness, and mutual love, which we ought always to have borne each other."

"And by regarding," said Mrs. Blazenton, "all the errors and follies of our earlier life, as so many dreams from which we have been awakened to happiness."

"Agreed," said he; "and laugh at them, as if they had not been our own, but merely subjects for ridicule and amusement."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Blazenton, "how strangely, but how strongly does truth work! My dear husband, this is the moment for which, for the last ten years of the last twenty, I have been longing—my heart yearned for it—it formed the subject of my dreams by night, my thoughts by day; but my spirit was high, my heart was proud, and I could not break the ice."

"That's it," said Blazenton; "I—felt, eh? what—don't you see?—never mind—there's no use in talking now—thank Heaven, we have met—eh—this Deveril."

"We will never part!" said the agitated lady; "perhaps, my dear George, we may again rally round us such of our old and real friends as are living."

"Yes, yes," said he, hiding his face in his hands; "and I shall again have a home—I shall again have comforts—it is woman only that can concentrate the happiness of domestic life."

"Thank Heaven this has happened," said Mrs. Blazenton, falling into her husband's arms.

"Ah," said Blazenton, shaking his head, "this affair will make these funny people here laugh, and we shall be the town talk for a week; but never mind, never mind—eh—what—I'm above *that*. It is never too late to repent: I admit the faults of my younger days, and I shall be satisfied with the approval of those I esteem."

At which part of the dialogue Mr. and Mrs. Blazenton fell out of each other's arms; and Deveril, his wife, and Captain Gossamer, rushed from the *bosquet*, in which they had been literally ambushed to witness the proceedings.

"There," said the master of the house, "what we meant at first as an innocent joke, has turned out a permanent good. Nothing can be more delightful to us—nothing, we think, can contribute more to your happiness and benefit, my dear friends. I and Mrs. Deveril, therefore hope and trust you will think that the gaieties of Mumjumble Lodge are not without some beneficial results. ODD PEOPLE as we are, we have happily worked out by *practice* the beautiful *precept*, FORGET and FORGIVE."

MAGPIE CASTLE.

Some years since, as I was travelling in the West of England, the following narrative was put into my hands. It struck me that it was not without interest, and, as I knew it to be true, I determined, at some time, to publish it. The manuscript is exactly in the state in which I received it.

There may be something like vanity in committing to paper a detail of circumstances peculiar to one's own "case;" and there may be nothing either amusing or instructive to others in an avowal of the feelings by which a young man was actuated upon his first entrance into

what is called life; yet I *do* think, treacherous as my memory unfortunately happens to be, that a brief detail of the events of past years, if it afford no gratification to other people, will, at least, amuse myself, as I look back upon it in days when the sentiments by which I was then actuated shall have faded away, and the motives to conduct (hardly now satisfactorily explicable) have ceased to operate.

My father, who contrived,—I scarcely understand how,—to maintain his wife (my mother-in-law), myself, and his two children by a second marriage, on the half-pay of a captain in the army, had bred me up, as a boy, with the view, and in the hope of being able to put me into the service from which he had himself retired. The formation of his new matrimonial connexion, however, entirely changed his intentions with regard to me; and, after having imbued my almost infant mind with the desire of military distinction, and the prospect of a laurel-reaping harvest of service, it was found more suitable to his means, and the taste of his wife, to place me at the school, in which I had not yet finished

my education, as a sort of half-boarder, from which character it was clearly intended I should eventually emerge in that of usher to my then present master.

It is impossible to describe the feelings I experienced when it became no longer a matter of concealment or mystery, that all hopes of a commission, or, indeed, an endeavour to procure me one, were abandoned, and I felt myself doomed to the eternal correction of a Latin exercise, instead of the superintendence of the manual and platoon; or the utter state of desolation in which I felt myself when I heard from my good old master,—for such he was,—that except marching the boys out for a walk on Wednesdays and Saturdays, I had no chance of commanding a detachment of any sort whatever.

When I quitted home altogether, which I did at seventeen, and took up my residence constantly at the academy, I felt some relief. I neither saw the barefaced cajolery with which my hateful mother-in-law wheedled and bullied my poor father; nor was I doomed, day after day, to witness the disgusting partiality with

which her two fractious, sickly, ill-tempered, ill-favoured brats were treated, and to which system of favouritism my poor deluded parent, with smiles on his countenance and pleasure in his eye, submitted. It is true I was in harness —the tread-mill would have been admirable fun compared with my toils; yet I was freed from the thraldom of a stepmother, and occasionally felt something like gratification in the consciousness that I could command at least the little boys at the academy.

In the space of three years after my retreat from home, my father had been compelled, by the extravagance of the new head of his family to sell his half-pay; and with the produce of this lamentable sacrifice he emigrated to America, where he died, leaving his amiable widow to the care of a most excellent friend, to whom the death-bed injunction of my poor parent to grant her his protection was, in point of fact, entirely superfluous.

It was not very long after this event that my old patron, the master of the academy, also died; and having in vain attempted to become

successor to his authority and school, I was dismissed from my office by the new arrival, who brought with him what, in my military phraseology, I termed his "personal staff," and therefore had no need of my further services. He, however, behaved extremely well to me, and, in addition to more flattering testimonials which I had received from his predecessor, gave me a letter of introduction to a Dr. Crowpick, who kept a scholastic establishment in the vicinity of London.

The word London, I admit, had something very bewitching in its sound to my ears; and yet I dreaded an approach to it. If I had been a soldier—if I could have entered the metropolis of my country as a captain of a company, or even as a lieutenant—it would have been something; but to go to London a mere nobody, in search of a "place," was very revolting to my feelings; and, as usual, I got rid of my bile by anathematizing the artful woman who had ruined my poor father and overthrown all my bright schemes of preferment.

After much declamation, and finding that

country bank-notes do not fructify at any agreeable rate during a period when the payments from the pocket very much exceed the receipts, I resolved upon the plunge; and accordingly, having deposited all my worldly goods in a black leathern portmanteau, which had been given to me by my former patron, I enveloped myself in a sort of gambroon cloak, which I had had made two or three years before, and started by the "Wonder" (a coach so called), which was to deposit me in London some time about four o'clock in the afternoon.

In these days of swift travelling, adventures on the outside of a stage-coach are not to be looked for, and I arrived at the place of my destination by three; for although I think it right, for obvious reasons, to conceal the name of the place where I eventually stopped, it may be necessary to observe that I was, under the advice of the coachman, set down at a remarkably pretty, small, suburban village, the inn of which boasted of a tenant more beautiful than anything I had ever happened to fall in with, in my native Arcadia. The coachman's reasons

for suggesting my "halt" there were good and cogent. Dr. Crowpick's academy was situated within a mile and a half of it, and of course stopping where I was would save me the distance from London back to the neighbourhood; but had the reason not been half so good, the sight of Jane Lipscombe—such was her name—would have decided the question of my stay in that particular place.

I never shall forget the sweet, unassuming, modest manner of the fair-haired girl, as she gently turned a pair of soft, intelligent, and beaming eyes towards the coach-box upon which I was seated, and whence, in a moment afterwards, I descended. There is a sympathy in minds and characters which neither station nor circumstances can control. She was the daughter of the innkeeper—she officiated as bar-maid; but she was so lovely, and so young, that I fancied myself already as much in love with her as I really was in the course of the next half-hour.

I entered the house,—it was coldish weather; she saw that I was chilled; she invited me into

her little territory, the bar. "Would I take anything?" That was her question,—purely disinterested too, as it proved. I was very shy at that time: this struck her immediately; it was a novelty, I suppose; she made me a glass of hot brandy and water, with a slice of lemon-peel and a lump of sugar in it, that seemed to me nectar.

"Are you in the army, Sir?" said Jane, timidly.

I thought I should have died. I really believe, if I had not just in time recollected that I was probably destined to be her neighbour, and perhaps should occasionally march my pigmy regiment under her window, I should have said yes,—as it was, I answered in the negative.

"There are a good many military gentlemen in this place," said Miss Lipscombe.

I wish they were anywhere else, thought I.

"No," said I, "I am going as far as Dr. Crowpick's, at Magpie Castle."

"Oh, to the school!" said Jane,—and she looked as if she doubted whether I was on the point of visiting it to finish my education.

"Oh, dear, then," replied the artless girl, "Stevens ought to have put you down at the Black Swan instead of our house; it is a mile nearer Magpie Castle than this."

"I prefer being here," said I, "if it were twice as far to walk."

I thought she looked pleased at this little innocent bit of civility.

"Is the brandy and water to your liking, Sir?" said she.

"Anything that you are good enough to give me I am delighted with," said I.

"Jenny," said a fine, handsome-looking fellow, with huge black mustachios, enveloped in a long cloak, and wearing a foraging cap, "some cigars, dear."

I hated the look of the man,—his easy assurance—the air of command—"Jenny, dear;" —altogether his appearance produced a most unpleasant effect upon me. Ah! thought I, if my father had not married that infernal Miss Peppercorn, *I* should have had mustachios and a foraging cap; and I should have called this interesting girl, Jenny—dear!

"Who have you got in the corner?" said the Lieutenant (for such he was).

"A gentleman," said Jenny, "from the country."

"Oh!" replied the Lieutenant, "a gentleman!" saying which, with a peculiarly strong emphasis on the word, he swaggered away with his half-dozen Havannahs, and marching into a room nearly opposite, banged open the door, and having entered, shut it by a manœuvre equally noisy and equally decisive.

"That is a very important person," said I. "Who is he?"

"Lieutenant O'Mealy, Sir," said Jane: "he is one of the officers quartered here."

"Here!" said I. "If we meet again, I think I shall be under the necessity of teaching him a little civility."

"Oh, Sir!" said Miss Lipscombe, "pray don't speak so; he means nothing. For heaven's sake do not get into any quarrel with him!"

"What," said I, "is he so great a favourite of yours?"

"Not he," said Jane;—and here she blushed! I never was very conceited; but I do honestly admit that I could not help thinking that Jane's solicitude was on *my* account rather than *his*.

"I should like to go into the room," said I. "I really must beg to know why he emphasized the word *gentleman*, in speaking of me. My father——"

"Oh, don't think of it, Sir!" said the dear girl, in a state of no gentle agitation. "He don't mean any harm; he'd amplisize anything, Sir. Pray don't go."

"Well," said I, "I cannot refuse *you*: I will not go. Pray tell me, is there nobody to manage this house but you and the servants?"

"Oh, yes," said Jane, "my father and mother; at least," continued she,—and I beheld a tear standing in her eye,—"it is not *my own* mother; it is my father's second wife."

The words rang in my ears;—this, perhaps, was the latent cause whence our sympathetic feelings originally sprang.

"Does she treat you well?" said I.

"Don't ask me, Sir," said the poor girl. "If you knew all I am obliged to suffer, you would indeed pity me."

"I hope," replied I, "to know a great deal more of your history before long."

"When do you go to the school?" said Jane.

"I am expected either to-night or to-morrow."

"You had better go on to the Swan then," said Jane: "and go this evening; for we have not a bed in the house disengaged."

This, somehow, vexed me. I had hoped, in the course of the evening, to have heard more of Jane's story, the similarity of which, in some points, to my own, had laid hold of my feelings.

"But," said I, "I should very, very much like to see you again."

"You shall," said Jane, whose manner visibly increased in warmth as she began to feel conscious of the interest she had excited. "I tell you, Sir, you don't know how cruelly I am treated. Indeed," continued she, "I am sure,

by your manner, you will forgive what I am going to say; but I am exposed to such scenes and such treatment in this place, that if I could only gain an honest livelihood by working ten times as hard as I am expected to work here, I would gladly change my condition."

Poor suffering innocent! thought I. Ah! she likes my manner; no doubt the quiet, unassuming modesty of my deportment affords a soothing contrast to the rude, forward, and unfeeling manner of that whiskered lieutenant. I shall never rest till I have taught that fellow manners.

"When," said I, "could I see you again, if I am forced to go hence this evening?"

"If you could be here early to-morrow I should be free from interruption," said Jane; "they (meaning her father and his wife) are never up very soon."

"And these officers?" said I.

"Are later still at breakfast," replied she.

"Then, depend upon it, I will be with you."

"Stay," said Jane, "in that case leave your

portmanteau; it will be an excuse if they should find you here in the morning. I will take the greatest of care of it."

"If it were all I had in the world," said I,—and, with the exception of fifteen pounds, nine shillings, and seven-pence, it was,—"I should be the better pleased to place it in your hands."

Dear girl, thought I, why should the prejudices of society interfere to mar our brightest prospects? Why should not a being, sensibly alive to the cruelties of a step-mother, and shrinking from the coarseness of an ill-mannered braggadocio, be a suitable companion for such a man as myself through life?

"I wonder," said I, "that you do not endeavour to escape the thraldom which you so much dislike."

"It is a serious move, Sir," said she. "*Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte.*"

"What!" said I, "do you speak French too?"

"Yes, Sir," said Jane. "I was brought up at boarding-school, and only sent for home, to

save my mother-in-law the trouble of attending here."

"What profanation!" whispered I. Never shall I forget with what rapt attention I watched her delicate fingers turn the tap of the patent porter-machine as she drew out the Meux's heavy, the double X, and the half-and-half, for the thirsty company who seemed to fill a large long tap-room to the right; nor cease to remember the thrill of pleasure which tingled through my veins as she replenished my portly tumbler of what she called "hot with," and cut the curling lemon-peel to give it flavour. Romeo wishes himself a glove that he may touch his Juliet's cheek—I would have given the world at that moment to have been half a lemon to have been pressed by Jenny's hand.

There occur in the course of our lives events, which are afterwards scarcely reconcileable in our own minds with what is called probability; and certainly the deep interest, nay, I will go the length of calling it the earnest affection, I felt for Jane Lipscombe in so short a space of time is one of those miracles which, perhaps,

those who had seen her as I saw her at that moment, might have considered *not* miraculous at all.

The thing that particularly struck me in her conduct was a sort of patronage of me, which mingled with her humility and reserve;—the humility was natural to her station—the reserve was characteristic of her modesty; but the patronage was evidently the result of a superior knowledge of what may be called the "worldly" world. She saw I was new to the environs of London, she saw in my manners an artless earnest of my real character, she felt assured that I meant well and spoke truly, and—may I say it? it is a long time ago—I think she was pleased with my personal appearance,—she certainly looked as if she were.

Our preliminaries were soon settled. Having abstracted from my portmanteau one or two articles essential to my comfort, and deposited it in the hands of my dear girl, I took my leave, promising to be with her by eight o'clock the next morning, and resolving, in my own mind at least, to show such a front to Lieutenant O'Mealy,

if I fell in with him out of her sight, as might convince him that I inherited my father's spirit and professional feeling, even though I had no other claim to military consideration than that of teaching the "young idea how *to shoot*."

I parted with Jane; it was all like a dream. I had even then established a principle upon which I have uniformly acted through life. I make a point of never developing circumstances which in point of fact can be interesting to nobody but the parties concerned: suffice it to say, we parted, and I left the bar, self-convicted of love for Miss Lipscombe. It was love at first sight; but its results, as we shall presently see, were not quite so evanescent.

I followed the instructions given me by my fair monitress; and after a pleasant walk of three-quarters of an hour, reached the *rara avis* of the next village—the Black Swan, at which I was perhaps to rest, or at all events, receive my further marching orders. It was a neat, country-looking inn, with a swinging sign, and a long water-trough in front; the stabling stood to the left hand, and there was a bay-window on

the right of the door; in the passage stood a nice comely woman, mistress of the house. As I approached she made way for me, and courtesying quite as low as a foot-traveller had any right to expect, bade me good afternoon. I glanced my eye from her smiling, shining countenance, and beheld in a glazed three-cornered larder opposite me, a cold round of beef.

Then and then only did it strike me that I had had no dinner; my appetite had been converted into a sentimental desire of hearing Jane Lipscombe talk, and the grosser and more sensual ideas of mutton-chops and beef-steaks had given place to visions of future happiness with the unsophisticated "Maid of the Inn." The sight of the cold round of beef, however, recalled me to a recollection of my bodily wants. I desired the landlady to lay a cloth and set the tempting viand before me.

"Ay, that I will," said Mrs. Bunny, (so was mine hostess called,) "and you shan't wait long, neither;" and *she*, like my lonely Jane, gave me a look, which I remember to this moment, expressive not only of readiness and anxiety to

oblige me, but of a desire to patronise and protect me. The fact is, that the freshness and innocence of my appearance bespoke the particular fostering care which both the young and the old lady were so well disposed to afford me.

Mrs. Bunny ushered me into a small sanded parlour, in which stood a round claw table and several leather-bottom chairs; in less than five minutes the table was robed for duty, and certainly before ten had expired I was seated before it, shaving the beef in the true boarding-school style. Mine hostess re-appeared with a brown jug of foaming home-brewed ale, which she placed by the side of my plate.

"Pray," said I, "how far is it to Dr. Crowpick's academy?"

"Crowpick?" said mine hostess, "Magpie Castle do you mean?"

"Exactly so," replied I.

"Why, Sir," answered the gentle Bunny, "I should say a good mile and a half. You cross over there by the finger-post; keep straight on, till you come to Mrs. Gubbins's Barn; then turn to the left by Harrison's wall, over the style;

then to the right till you get to Simpson's farm, and so round by Dallington-green, to the high-road just above Gurney's, and that brings you out just by the gate."

"Thank you," said I. "Why, at Lipscombe's they told me it was not more than a mile from this."

"Lipscombe's," said Mrs. Bunny, her eyes extending themselves to a stare of the most awful nature, "what, have *you* been at Lipscombe's?"

"Yes," said I: "what then?"

"And you have got out of the house safe?"

"As you see," said I.

"You have been lucky," said the old lady. "I say nothing; it's no use tattling and speaking against one's neighbours; but a nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse; you understand me. Have you got everything that you took there!"

"Everything," said I, "that I wished to have; I left my portmanteau with Miss Lipscombe."

"Miss!" repeated my Black Swan, in a tone

and with an expression of countenance which struck me to resemble very closely those of Lieutenant O'Mealy, when he pronounced the word "Gentleman;" "you have left your portmanteau *there;* well—I dare say it is very safe. I say nothing, only—people *have* lost portmanteaus there before."

"But," said I, "you do not mean to say that Jane Lipscombe is capable of committing a robbery!"

"Not I, Sir," said Mrs. Bunny. "God forbid that I should take away anybody's character; only people, you know, *will* talk,—and they *do* say——"

"She is very pretty," said I; "that you must allow?"

"Handsome is, as handsome does," said mine hostess. "She is well enough for that,—if all her colour grows where it shows. You understand me, Sir."

"Ah!" said I, "that is pure malice. All the roses on *her* cheeks are Nature's own."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Bunny, looking uncommonly arch, "what! they don't rub off? Ah,

well! I never tried: however, if you will take my advice, Sir, and you are coming into this neighbourhood, don't you go there any more."

"I *am* coming to live in this neighbourhood," said I, "and I am going there to-morrow morning to fetch my portmanteau."

"I'll send for it for you, if you like," said Mrs. Bunny: "the Lipscombes and we are great friends."

"Yes," said I, "nobody can doubt that,—as far as *you* are concerned. No, I shall go myself."

"Are you going to stay at Doctor Crowpick's, Sir?" asked mine hostess.

"I believe so," was my answer.

"And mean to go to Lipscombe's to-morrow?"

"Yes."

"Well, Sir," said Mrs. Bunny, "you must pass this door in your way. My husband is not at home now, and I don't like to do anything without asking him,—I shall have time to talk it over when he comes back,—

and, if he is agreeable, I'll tell you something about these Lipscombes which you ought to know."

"Thank you," said I.

A sudden noise in the passage attracted mine hostess, who left me, and I confess in a state of mind exactly the reverse of agreeable. Yet what was Jane Lipscombe to *me?* After all, it was but a momentary acquaintance, and that, too, with only a bar-maid. That she was very pretty, I knew,—that she was extremely amiable, I believed: however, the morning would soon arrive, and having heard all mine hostess and her husband had to say, I should form my own judgment, and decide whether or not I would go and fetch my portmanteau. I speedily summoned Mrs. Bunny, and having discharged my little bill, bade her a good afternoon, and promised to come to her early in the morning.

"Sir," said she, "don't be angry with me for what I am going to say;—I feel very anxious about you:—do you know much of Dr. Crowpick?"

"Not I," said I. "I never even saw him."

"Well," replied she, "of course it is not my place to speak, but we are none of us any better than we should be. Have you got much money about you?"

"Why," said I, in the simplicity of my heart, "not much;—a matter of fifteen sovereigns or so."

"Now, my dear gentleman," said the kind-hearted woman, with tears standing in her eyes, "do you leave it with me; I will take honest care of it, and ye shall have it either as ye want it, a little at a time, or all in a lump, when ye please to ask me for it; don't take it across them fields to old Crowpick's."

"What," said I, "are there thieves in the neighbourhood?"

"I say nothing, Sir," said Mrs. Bunny: "there *are* black sheep in most flocks: here nobody can rob you. Take my advice, leave all your money, except a few shillings just for present use."

The carefulness of the woman gave me an unpleasant feeling; it seemed to unsettle my

confidence even in Crowpick himself. However, I was quite sure by her look and manner that she could not cheat or deceive me, and I counted out fourteen of my sovereigns into her hand: little did I think at the moment what results this single, simple action would produce;—no matter, I will not anticipate. She wrapped them carefully up in a piece of an old newspaper, —the "Daily Advertiser," I recollect,—and deposited them in her pocket.

"Now," said she, "you have acted wisely; call here whenever ye want your money, it shall be always ready. I wish you luck, and health, and happiness."

She spoke these words with an earnestness which struck me forcibly at the time; her real feelings towards me at that period I could not of course appreciate.

I left her and the house, and proceeded on my way to the Doctor's, but, as I marched on, I missed the way she had pointed out, and continued along the high road, (making a difference of not more than half a mile,) until I reached the green gates of Magpie Castle.

The sight of the entrance to what might, in all probability, be my residence for the rest of my life, excited a thousand contending feelings in my bosom; the most predominant of which was the dislike I felt to my introduction, and a kind of apprehensive diffidence of the first half-hour's conversation. I rung the bell, and was admitted. The Doctor was at home.

I never shall forget the appearance of the house;—an unwieldy, red-brick building, castellated, with a turret at one corner. I crossed the court-yard, entered by a glazed door, and followed my guide through the hall to a square wainscoted parlour, where I remained while the servant went to announce me. Little did I at the moment anticipate the events of which that square wainscoted parlour was destined to be the scene.

A few moments only elapsed before I was ushered into the "presence." The Doctor was seated in an arm-chair, and in a sort of black dressing-gown, which to the uninitiated had something the appearance of a scholastic habit; before him stood a large cup half full of tea,

a plate which had contained toast and butter, of which one slice still remained uneaten; on his right hand lay piled up a heap of Latin exercises, one selected from which he was correcting.

Facing him was seated she whom I then imagined, and soon after too certainly knew, to be his daughter; her expressive grey eyes, half veiled by the longest and blackest eye-lashes I ever saw, were raised for a moment as I entered the apartment, but in another instant they were suddenly withdrawn and thrown, not as the best-established novelists have it, "under the table," but upon a book which she held in her hand, and "read or seemed to read."

"Emma, dear," said Crowpick, after having bowed to me, and held out his hand with an air of cordiality. Upon hearing which, "Emma, dear," forthwith rose from her seat, and having asked, in the sweetest voice I ever heard, whether her papa chose any more tea, and having been answered in the negative, quitted the room, not, however, without affording me one glance which seemed to say, "I know whom you are,

and why you are come here. We shall be very good friends in time."

I had heard a great deal of Dr. Crowpick from my late master's successor, and a great deal about his system of education; but I had never heard a syllable about his daughter. The moment I saw her, I resolved not to quarrel about terms with the Doctor, and even to lower my salary one half for the pleasure of living in the same house with her; little did I suspect her real position in that family.

When the young lady had left us, Crowpick began the conversation which I had previously so much dreaded; the anticipation, however, was not justified by the reality, for, in a very few minutes, I found the Doctor a man of the world, liberal in his views and feelings, and quite prepared to receive me with kindness and good nature.

"We will not talk more of business this evening," said the Doctor. "You will do Mrs. Crowpick and myself the favour of supping with *us*. When you are established you will find supper always laid in what is called the tutors'

room, and where—it is as well to be explicit at once—Mr. Bowman, Mr. Dixon, and Monsieur Louvel, the other assistants, will be much pleased to add you to their little party."

I bowed acquiescence.

"I will show you your bed-room," said the urbane Doctor. "I hope you will find it convenient; make no ceremony, if anything is wanting to add to its little comforts, only mention it."

Saying which, the excellent pedagogue lighted a candle and marshalled me the way that I should go.

We ascended a secondary staircase, and passed three or four rooms in which stood many beds. At the fifth door in the passage the Doctor stopped, and opening it, presented to my view a very neat and agreeable looking apartment.

"This is destined for *you*," said the Doctor. "Where is your luggage?"

"I did not bring any, Sir," said I, "because I was not certain that ——"

"Certain," interrupted the Doctor, "you

might have been quite certain that, after the testimonials I had received, you would not quit me. Can we send for your things?"

"I have left them," said I, "at Lipscombe's."

"At Lipscombe's!" said the Doctor, "at Lipscombe's!—Umph!—Pray did you see anything there of a Lieutenant O'Mealy?"

I was puzzled. What ought I to say! I had no business to know that the swaggering object of my hatred was called by any such name; yet I did know it. I answered in the affirmative.

"How strange!" said Crowpick. "You had better let me send for them early in the morning."

"I—meant to have gone," stammered I.

"Go!" said the Doctor; "not for the world. You are now settled here; I already consider you one of my family. No, no;—I'll send over for them. What do they consist of?"

"Only a portmanteau, Sir," said I.

"How strange!" ejaculated the Doctor. "Well, I have shown you your room;—now let

us go down stairs; I dare say we are expected in the parlour."

The parlour! thought I. What is to be done now?

I implicitly followed my venerable guide. A bell rang loudly. In a moment the scuffling of innumerable feet sounded along the passages. —It was the first time I had heard that bell—would it had been the last.

The Doctor turned half round to me, and said, "That is for prayers. Past nine—boys' bed-time."

We returned to the room in which I had first been, and the Doctor extinguished the lamp which had been brought in, after my arrival. Again he desired me to follow him. I did so, and reached the "parlour."

The Doctor opened the door: I entered. The first person I saw, and to whom I was presented in due form, was Mrs. Crowpick; the second, and whom I scarcely saw while the ceremony of introduction was performing, was Miss Emma; and the third, to whom the Doctor said

he supposed he need not introduce me, was —Lieutenant O'Mealy himself.

The Lieutenant looked surprised, not at my appearance, for it turned out he did not recognize me, but at the Doctor's observation upon the non-necessity of an introduction.

"You have met before," said the Doctor to the Lieutenant.

"Not to my knowledge," said the odious Lieutenant.

"I thought," said Crowpick, turning to me rather sharply, "you said you had seen Mr. O'Mealy at Lipscombe's."

"So I did, Sir," said I, a good deal worried at the entanglement of the affair.

"I don't recollect," said the Lieutenant, in a much softer manner than I had heard him speak in the earlier part of the day.

"I came there by the Wonder, and——"

"Oh!" said the Lieutenant. "Ah, you were in the bar, drinking hot brandy and water; I remember. I did not at first recollect. I suppose the bar-maid told you my name."

I felt myself blush and shudder at the same

moment. I said nothing, and affected to smile. I cast my eyes round the room, in hopes of relief, when I beheld the gazelle-eyed Miss Crowpick gazing at me with an expression of archness and pity which I never shall forget. The sequel to this little conversation was more important than might be imagined.

Supper was announced: it was half-past nine. Mrs. Crowpick rose and waddled into the next room—another parlour. Lieutenant O'Mealy, with a horrid smile, which exhibited his great white teeth through his black mustachios to the best possible advantage, offered Emma his arm; she smiled too, and accepted it, The Doctor good-naturedly patted my shoulder, and pushed me forward before himself.

The supper consisted of a dish of tripe, fried in batter,—I had never seen such a thing before, —a cold, much-cut leg of roast mutton, ornamented with bits of parsley, and a dish of poached eggs upon a plot of spinach.

The way in which Mr. O'Mealy eyed me as we were sitting down, added to the repast of cold beef at Mr. Bunny's, considerably

damped the ardour of my appetite. I resolved that the next day should not elapse without my endeavouring to set myself right with this gallant gentleman, and determined to rally from the embarrassment which his unexpected presence occasioned.

Mrs. Crowpick helped the top dish; Emma took an egg; the Lieutenant took two. The Doctor inquired what *I* would eat. I scarcely knew what he was saying; but, by an effort, I commanded myself, and answered him, in a tolerably firm voice,—"TRIPE."

* * * * * *

I regret to say that the MS., as I received it, terminates here.

A TRIP OVER LONDON[1].

I HAD for many years been extremely solicitous to ascend in a balloon. It was a fancy of my youth, which did not fade in my riper years: at school I made balloons, and watched them wistfully as they sprang from my hands, and thought how happy I should be if I could take the same lofty flight.

When Mr. Green came to Liverpool—of which place I am a native, and have ever since my birth been a constant inhabitant—I visited

[1] It seems necessary to the vindication of the writer of this trifle from a charge of plagiarism, to say that it was published several years previous to the publication of Mr. Poole's interesting and humourous details of an aërial voyage *actually* made by him with Mr. Green in 1838.

him previous to his ascent, conversed with him upon my favourite topic, found him intelligent and communicative, and—which rendered him even still more interesting in my mind—confident in the safety and security of his high-going carriage; and but for the fear of *éclat*, which I thought might do me an injury in my profession, I should most certainly have been tempted to accompany him from my native town. I debated the matter in my mind, while yet the inflation of the balloon was in progress, but the aëronaut (like the woman) who deliberates, is lost; and while I was arguing with myself, and weighing the pleasures I should receive from my prospect of the heavens, against the damage likely to accrue to my prospects on earth, my flighty friend was off; the last rope was cut, the huge globe soared over my head, and I found myself a mere point in the circle which, a moment before, had been wholly occupied by the vast machine.

Time and tide, I had always heard, wait for no man—I found that the same might be said of balloons. I had fancied and considered, until

the opportunity of going was gone; and I stood like a fool, gazing at my darling object until I saw nothing of my friend Green, but the waggle of his flag. The rapidity with which the object diminished gave me a sort of aching pang, and when my verdant friend plunged into a black cloud, I stamped my foot upon the ground, as if only then convinced of the impossibility of catching him.

> "The boy thus, when his sparrow's flown,
> The bird in silence eyes;
> Till out of sight at last 'tis gone,
> He whimpers, sobs, and cries."

So says Gay; and although by no means gay myself, so felt I, upon the occasion to which I refer.

Well! the disappointment served rather to inflame than abate the anxiety I felt for an aërial trip, and so I lived on. But my friend and idol, the aëronaut, did not return to Liverpool; spring came, but no Green—summer passed, and autumn died away—yellow—all my expectations fell like the leaves, and I was doomed for several years to smother, or rather

conceal from others, my violent passion for the clouds.

Yet, why should I feel ashamed of my partiality? Wyndham—not a very inappropriate name, to be sure—the great Wyndham went up in a balloon; so did the exemplary Edward Hawke Locker. The Duc de Chartres went up in a fire-balloon; a most respectable Doctor of Medicine crossed the channel from England to France with Mr. Blanchard; a Paget has accompanied Mr. Sadler; a General has ascended by himself, and immortalized his name by tumbling into the sea; and a learned Barrister on the northern circuit quitted the earth, only a few years since, with Green himself. Still I kept my desire pent up, lest the kind anxiety of my respectable mother and two elegant sisters (both still unmarried)—treasures, with such hearts—should be unnecessarily excited, and their influence too successfully exerted in order to pin me to the earth.

Little did I imagine that an unforeseen accident should occur to afford me the gratification I had so long thirsted after. Business, sudden

and important, called me to London about the middle of August—that fact of itself was important to me; for, although I have passed my twenty-eighth year, London I had never seen. A first visit to such a metropolis is as an insulated, unaccompanied circumstance—an epoch in a life. I felt it so; I anticipated all the pleasures of novelty—all the gratification of curiosity—all the realization of the fancies I had conjured up of splendour, opulence, magnificence, and amusement. These, however, I was much inclined to believe could hardly exceed the realities of Liverpool, which even now, after having seen all the great features of this great town, I do not consider, taken as a whole, likely to lose by comparison with the capital of the empire. This is my present feeling, and I have written to express it to the unsophisticated young creature to whom I am engaged to be married. —No matter, I arrived at the Bull-and-Mouth in Bull-and-Mouth Street. I certainly was disappointed—it did not at all fulfil my expectations of comfort, or magnificence. I could not help comparing it with "the Waterloo;"

and even descended to a comparison of an uncouth, unwashed female attendant who received me at the door, with the neat, nice, smart, clean, good-natured Lancashire witches, who, in the shape of chambermaids, get everything in order at our palace of a hotel, in the twinkling of an eye.

I was dreadfully tired; went to bed—slept soundly till three o'clock in the afternoon—rang my bell—called for hot water—shaved, dressed, and descended into the coffee-room—took a meal which served for breakfast, luncheon, and even dinner, as it turned out; again grievously disappointed—nevertheless made up in quantity for what seemed a falling off in quality, and while I was discussing a third slice of cold roasted beef, the sun happening to shine, by reflection, on the back of a lamp, the original ray having darted inwards between a group of chimneys which overhung the arched windows, I caught a glimpse of a bill stuck over the fire-place, in the middle of which I distinguished two black balls; at first I fancied it a globe-maker's advertisement—then I took it for the

representation of a pair of kettle-drums—then for a pair of stays—then for a pair of spectacles; I could not, in the very frenzy of my imagination, have conjured it into what it really was.

"What is that bill about?" said I to a waiter.

"That, Sir?" said the man; "it's the bill of the balloon-race to-day."

"A what!" exclaimed I.

"A balloon-race from Vauxhall," was the answer.

"A race!" screamed I; "what! two balloons?—impossible—this *is* a variety! I, like the poet, could have found,

——'Variety in one.'

But a pair of balloons—this is too much! Where is Vauxhall?"

The expression which pervaded the countenances of the waiters and the guests at this extraordinary question, I cannot attempt to describe. It was clear they thought me either a fool or a madman, and it was equally clear

that they decided upon the latter when I desired them to call me a hackney-coach, in order that I might drive to the gardens, and secure a place with Mr. Green.

"Who is Mr. Green?" said one of the waiters. This surprised me; that Mr. Green should not be previously known in every hole and corner of the metropolis, was a wonder.

"Green, cries the other in a fury"—

"Why the chap as goes up in the hair."

"Chap"—"Hair,"—this was too much. I could no longer endure the atmosphere in which such creatures breathed; and having as speedily as possible made my preparations, and announced my intention of sleeping at "mine inn" again that night, I jumped into a dirty hackney-coach, not half so neat or convenient as those at Liverpool, and drove as fast as two skeletons, with hides strained over them, could drag me, to Vauxhall Gardens. The coachman who drove me wore a glazed hat and spectacles, and smoked a cigar. I mention these facts as peculiarities.

I squeezed my way through a road thronged with men, women, children, horses, carriages, donkeys, and dog-carts. I was pleased at this demonstration of active curiosity and intense interest. I jostled one way and pushed another, until at last I reached the door,—by an effort, paid my shilling, and in a very few minutes after, being nearly pummelled to death by this most extraordinarily-mixed mob, found myself, to *my* delight and *his* infinite surprise, shaking hands with the intrepid aëronaut himself. A moment's conversation settled the affair; I had come to realize my wishes—Had he a place?—Could I go? To both these questions I received affirmative answers, and I felt an instantaneous sensation of great pleasure and a little apprehension: however, I looked round and saw the eyes of all Vauxhall fixed upon me, and I determined to behave like a man.

It was a new position, and therefore a difficult one—I had suddenly become an object of interest, and one of the strongest feelings excited in my own mind was the entire strange-

ness to me of the faces and persons of the multitude by whom we were surrounded;—at Liverpool I should have known half the people present—did know them upon the occasion of Mr. Green's ascent there. Here all was blank —I had nobody to nod to; no cheering smile to encourage, no friendly admonition to check me. The effect was so curious, and I so nervous, that I kept perpetually pulling out my watch, and looking at the dial, as if that could tell me whom such and such persons were who stared at me with looks not very dissimilar from those of the waiters at the Bull-and-Mouth. One thing Mr. Green was certainly not prepared for—I mean the curious fact, that I had never seen London, and was now destined to see it from a height, and supersede the trouble taken by ordinary men of threading its maze-like streets, and poking into its nooks and corners; *I* was to behold the metropolis at a glance—to grasp it all by one look; to gaze at it as a map spread out before me, and see it eagle-wise laid at my feet.

The twin balloons began now, as it were, to grow impatient of restraint. The shouts of the

people without, who appeared most cordially to sympathize in this impatience, warned us that our time was short. A peal of patteraroes thundered through the air—Green was actively engaged in securing the car, and stowing in the moveables. In making things snug a minute more elapsed, and the words—"If you are coming, now is the time," forced me to the necessity of action.

"*If*," said I, and in a minute more I was in the car.

I felt a new sensation—I was not in the air, but I was not on the earth; and when I felt the swag of the huge thing which rolled about over my head, I began to think the journey was not quite so agreeable an undertaking as, till I found myself on the point of being cast off from all connexion with the lower world, I had fancied it. In order to gratify the genteel mob within, Mr. Green, who had himself entered the car, directed that we should be allowed to ascend a few yards; this was done, and I felt remarkably sick. I am afraid I looked pale; but I affected to smile and waggle my flag as he bid me. This exhibition was repeated two or three

times. It did not at all improve by repetition: my feelings, I must admit, were not much soothed when Green, showing me two pieces of leather attached to the inside of the car, asked me if I had not better strap myself in, giving as a reason, that several of his former companions had become senseless during their progress, and he found it safer to prevent in that manner any accident arising from their toppling overboard. I indignantly said, I was not in the least afraid. "Oh," said my companion, "neither were those gentlemen *afraid;* the insensibility is produced by the change of atmosphere." I accepted the explanation with a parliamentary readiness, and Mr. Green said something which I did not exactly hear, for a fire of patteraroes ensued, and amongst the smoke and a tremendous shouting, I found myself suddenly over the high trees of the gardens, which, with everything round them, seemed to fall from under me, my only sensation of rising being confined to the soles of my feet, against which I felt a strong pressure. We were over the river; our companion balloon

was then close to us—we, however, rose superior, and I beheld the metropolis for the first time. It did not appear so large as Liverpool, nor were the streets to my eye near so wide.

It was only by my exclamation of surprise Mr. Green discovered that I had never seen London before! his good nature induced him to abstain from throwing out any more ballast for the present, in order to give me a good view of it.

"I see," said I, "some handsome palaces under us; those, I suppose, are noblemen's houses?"

"No," said my companion, "those are club-houses, in which men live cheap and fine; there are many of them. That long unfinished building there is the National Gallery."

"National!" said I; "why it looks like a rabbit-hutch, and the domes at either end remind me of the grottoes of oyster-shells which the little boys beg one to remember the first day of the season. What is that string of carriages there?"

"Members of both Houses of Parliament going to their duty," said my companion.

"Many too are walking."

"Yes," said Green; "owing to your inexperience in these regions, you are unable to distinguish objects so distinctly as habit enables me to do; those things that look to you like flies are eminent statesmen. Do you see that little creature hurrying along the pavement, like a midge running upon a bit of tape?"

"Yes," said I, although I did not, only I did not like to admit the superiority of his habitual long-sightedness.

"That," said my companion, "is Lord John Russell, the saviour of his country."

I said nothing, seeing which way Green's politics lay; it seemed ridiculous to differ in opinion with him at that height, so I only looked down upon his Lordship and thought the more.

"Those," said I, pointing to a confused heap, "are, I conclude, the ruins of the House of Commons."

"Exactly so," said Green.

"And where," said I, "does the House of Commons sit now?"

"Where the House of Lords did," said Green: "their Lordships were forced to turn out for the representatives of the people; they sit in the Painted Chamber—an apartment which has been likened to the cabin of a steam-packet; but halloo! we have got into a different current—here we are, over the Regent's Park."

"Indeed!" said I; "what an odd-looking place this is; don't I see a pig rolling itself in a puddle?"

"Pig!" said Green; "God bless your soul, that's the elephant, rubbing himself in the mud, and washing himself afterwards."

"Indeed!" said I; "and what are those little white, and blue, and pink dots I see all round the beast?"

"Dots!" said Green; "they are all ladies of fashion, who go to enjoy the sight; why that, and the monkeys occupy the attention of half the beau-monde on Sundays. That thing like a pudding basin is the top of the Colosseum—a

new place of entertainment, just now in vogue. Look down to your right; that's the Opera House; see what a crowd of carriages are thronging round its doors. On the opposite side of the street, that little white speck with the three-cornered thing in the front is the Haymarket Theatre."

"I see no crowd there," said I.

"No," said Green; "it is the height of fashion for people to pay guineas to see what they dislike, and hear what they don't understand; but it is not thought right to bore oneself with the English drama."

"Halloo!" said I, "here we are over the grottoes again; what is that place that looks like a case of cruets?"

"Cruets!" said Green; "that is the Millbank Penitentiary, nearly opposite our starting-place; and what you take for pepper, mustard, oil, and vinegar bottles, are towers of the prison."

"But look," said I, casting my eyes on the river; "who are those poor wretches dressed up in striped coats, pulling their long boats against the stream?"—it is wonderful how much

the reflection from the water aids the sight—"are they some of the convicts out of the Penitentiary?"

"Convicts," said Green; "why, man alive, those are officers of the Guards, and other considerable persons, who take the greatest delight in rowing as hard as they can pelt from Whitehall to Putney, where they regale themselves on tea, eggs, bread and butter, and then row back again in time to dress for dinner. Do you see that dark-looking place?" We had now descended very considerably.

"That?" said I; "why it looks like a rat-trap."

"No, no," said Green, "the great rat trap is in Westminster. That is the King's Bench prison; do you see men playing at fives?"

"I see little white things flying about," said I.

"One of them is a gentleman of rank, and once of fortune."

"I envy you your exquisite sight," said I.

"*He* would not," said Green, "if he were here; for there—you see that long white street of houses with the column at the end of it?"

"Column?" said I; "yes, with the statue on the top."

"Exactly so," said Green; "run your eye along the left hand of that street—you see a crowd of carriages there."

"I do," said I.

"The one drawn close up to the pavement belongs to that man's wife; she is at Howell and James's, buying ribbands, bonnets, scarves, and all the other necessaries of life, while her husband, said to be at Paris, is wearing out his time in that very King's Bench. Here," said he, "do you see that cabriolet driving full tilt along Pall Mall?"

"Which is Pall Mall?" said I.

"That street—there."

"What, with the hospital at the end of it?"

"Hospital?" said Green, "that's St. James's Palace—do you see now?"

"I do."

"Do you see a smart chariot crossing the square?"

"Plainly."

"The man in the chariot is coming down to

the House of Lords by one road, the man in the cab is going by another to my lord's house, where he purposes to console my lady in her lord's absence. If you keep your eyes upon them you will find what I say is true—you cannot think what odd things I see when I am hovering over this great town."

"The Asmodeus of the air," said I.

"We have drifted over the city," said Green. "That large building to your right is the Bank —the heart of the nation; and that is the Mansion-house, the palace of the city; that white spot a little further on, is the East India-house, where twenty-four honourable private gentlemen rule the destinies of upwards of an hundred millions of people. Do you see that open space to the northward?"

I cast my eyes on the compass, and followed he direction of my guide. "Yes," said I, "a place covered with network,"

"Net work!" said Green, "not a bit of it. Those are pens for cattle. That is Smithfield, —a market in the middle of the most thickly peopled part of the capital; the inhabitants of

which are in danger of their lives twice in every week from the half-mad cattle that are driven to and from it; yet so infatuated are the cockneys, and so fond of money, that for the lucre of gain —it cannot be for the smell of the place—half the citizens are up in arms because it is proposed to establish a new market in the suburbs, and convert the old one into squares and streets, like those at the west end of the town. That high building is Guildhall, where they transact city business, make speeches, eat dinners, elect sheriffs, and do ten thousand other things worthy of remark."

"But," said I, "there is another building very like it to the left."

"The hall of Christ's Hospital," said Green; "as a modern work unique. That is the Post Office,—modest, plain, and simple. You are too high to see its beauties minutely, and, as minute beauties go, perhaps you would not see many more if you were much nearer."

"That," said I, "is the Post Office."

"Exactly," replied Green; "close to where you landed from your coach. Lord Lichfield is

postmaster; was master of the stag-hounds; they went too fast for a gouty man, so his Lordship now starts the mails instead of the deer."

"By the antithesis," said I, "you mean the males instead of the females."

"No, indeed," said Green; "I never joke."

"You are above *that*," said I.

"And everything else just now," said Green, which convinced me that he *was* really a joker in the highest degree.

"The Monument," said I, "looks like a lighted candle."

"Good," said Green; "I see, Sir, you are getting collected and enjoy your trip. No need of the straps."

"Not a bit," said I; "but how we *are* twisting about!"

"Baffling winds," said Green, "as the sailors have it. Here we are over the Tower."

"I hear the lions roaring," said I, who had heard much of them in the country.

"Not a bit of it," said Green, "there are no lions there now. The present government

thought it too great a luxury for the King to have a menagerie, and so the beasts have been sold to a trumpetting show-man, and nothing is left to be seen but a bear and a baboon."

"Ah!" said I, reminded of dear Liverpool, "those are docks."

"Exactly so," said Green. "When they were made, the East India proprietors and West India planters were people of property and importance: now their biggest and best ships lie rotting for want of freight, and the docks themselves serve for little more than fish-ponds for the cockneys. Now you see Greenwich Hospital."

"What! that?" said I; "it is a palace to look at."

Green at this moment handed me a glass of sherry, and we took that opportunity of drinking the ladies we had left behind.

"Now," said Green, "we must get up a little higher." Saying which he shook out one of his bags of ballast, and I very soon became sensible of increased coldness in the atmosphere,—a sort of drizzly mist involved us; but we passed

through it, and saw the sun shining in all its splendour. I looked down, but earthly objects were invisible, and all I saw was something very like huge bags of cotton rolling about under us which under all the circumstances, I felt pretty well assured must be clouds. Green confirmed my suspicions. We drank a second glass of sherry, and my excellent master and pilot made preparations for descending. I was as little sensible of the descent as I had previously been of the ascent, except by seeing my little flag curl himself upwards; and in a few minutes I beheld what to my eyes was a much more beautiful spectacle than it presented when we left it—I mean the view of the earth as we approached it.

The cry of "Balloon! balloon!" was perfectly distinct. I knew nothing of the locality, but the moment Green, with his eagle eyes, caught sight of the land, he pronounced that we were nearly over Hammersmith bridge, which looked to me like a cribbage-board, and the toll-keepers at the end like pegs towards the struggling close of the game. He pointed to some Lom-

bardy poplars, which I took for asparagus, as the site of Brandenburg House, of which I had heard much as a boy, and which, in one of the septennial visitations of insanity by which England is said to be afflicted, was, with its "great lessee," an object of some importance. Sion, the seat of the patriotic, princely Duke of Northumberland, next presented itself to view, and, nearer our hand, Kew, the nursery of our royal family, and Richmond Hill beyond it, of which I had read and heard so much.

"There," said Green, pointing to a house amongst some corn and turnip-fields, "lived and died Cobbett, a man who only wanted consistency to have been an ornament to his country." Having said which, I thought my gallant companion was about to evince his partiality to that great man's memory by bobbing down into one of his ruta-baga fields; however, we were now almost on a level with the trees, and Green, bidding me hold on and look sharp, shook out a little more of his dust, and we were gently lifted over a hedge, and touched our dirty mother

about half a mile beyond the seat of the deceased Porcupine.

People rushed towards us in all directions; and such are the gentleness and good taste of a Cockney mob, that the balloon and the car were with very considerable difficulty preserved from their destroying paws.

"Well," said I to myself, "this sort of indelicate scramble would never take place at Liverpool."

However, we did our best, and I helped to express—as Green expresses it—the gas which remained in the machine; and, in less than an hour, we were in a state to return to Vauxhall, which I did with my companion, and was delighted to regale on pulled chickens and arrack punch, charmed with my excursion, and resolved to write down as much of what I had seen when in the regions above, as was consistent with propriety. We certainly *did* see many things more, but I cannot repeat them—*cetera desunt*,—or, as my friend Green would perhaps say, *indesunt*. I received, however, a good moral lesson by my voyage, and felt con-

vinced that men in balloons are very much like much greater people in high stations, who, while the world they look down upon, seems little to them, appear themselves little in the eyes of all the world.

PRACTICAL JOKES.

Of the frequent serious effects of practical jokes much has been said; and in a recently published book (which, for modesty's sake on the part of the inditer of this sketch, shall be nameless) the pranks and absurdities of one of what the Chinese would call first-chop performers in that line have been somewhat at length exposed. Mr. Daly, however, escaped without doing any very serious mischief to anybody but himself; and so the retribution was satisfactory, and the fool's bolt once shot, the fool himself was obliged to bolt at last [1].

Different was the fate of Mr. Stephen Satterthwaite, of whom it becomes a duty imperative on me to write. I say imperative, because I

[1] *Vide* Gilbert Gurney.

consider myself in the situation of a farmer who adorns his barn-door with the remains of all the vermin destroyed in the course of the season, not only as proof of his own vigilance, but as a warning to others of the same tribes to abstain from habits and practices not only destructive to the peace and property of others, but to their own comfort and safety.

Satterthwaite—I knew him well and long—was a short stout fellow, with bristly hair, a reddish nose, a short neck, and a round body stuck upon short legs—a sort of fellow who would pull your chair from under you, just as you were going to sit down; slap-bang whack you come, with your head right against a steel-fender or a marble chimney-piece—what fun—something to laugh at. He would pick your pocket of your handkerchief just as he saw you with a severe cold in your head going to blow your nose—what fun. In fact, he was one of those irritating monsters who, having perpetrated the most abominable solecism, either touching yourself or somebody else, says—what fun—something to laugh at.

One of Satterthwaite's best jokes was tying a bit of meat very securely to the bell-handles which dangle outside the gates of certain suburban villas—sweet retirements of snug citizens—the result of which operation was, that every hungry dog who chanced to pass that way, instinctively, reasonably almost, but naturally certainly, began to grabble at the tempting morsel, which he vainly attempted to detach; the inevitable consequence of which attempt was the violent ringing of the bell—out come the servants candle in hand, look all round—hear nothing, see nothing, shut the gate and go in. The next doggy who comes trotting along, and who has not happened to dine well, has another touch at the meat, away goes the bell again, out come the servants as before, and as before, go in again. And thus ten times in the night the family continue to be alarmed beyond measure at what appears to be a systematic attack upon Hawthorn Cottage or Eglantine Lodge, the master of which is a decided hypochondriac, and the mistress expecting to be confined every half hour.

The old hacknied trick of changing the signs of inns was a great favourite with Satterthwaite: but he refined upon the old system of removing the whole of a show-board. He showed his ingenuity in making a sort of cross-reading in his playfulness. For instance, he broke off half the sign-board of a hair-dresser at Dorchester, and stuck it under the existing board of a man who let flies and glass-coaches, and the combination produced this—"Robert Dickenson, Glass-coaches and Flies to Let by the Day or Hour, as well as Ladies Fronts and Toupées." While at Abergavenny he distinguished himself by superadding to the sign-board of "Mr. Hickstrop, Surgeon," that which he had broken away from a poor woman's cottage hard by, which gave the addition of "Mangling Done Here."

Satterthwaite was a sort of Sylvanus Urban, equally active in town or country. He had the felicitous skill, not exclusively his own, of bringing chopped horse-hair into the service, which well strewed, and sprinkled with a little salt, between the sheets of his intimate friend, drove

him out of bed half mad in half an hour; and he was perfect in the art of boring a hole through a wainscot, and carrying a string through it, which was tied to the bed-clothes of the respectable gentleman sleeping in the next room—as soon as the victim proclaims himself fast asleep by that most ungenteel of noises, snoring, Satterthwaite gives a twitch of his packthread, and off go quilt, sheet, and blankets; the sufferer, surprised, jumps out to catch the vanishing covering, the sudden departure of which is to him unaccountable? he collects his comforts again, wonders how it could have happened, rolls himself up most carefully, and again falls asleep—that moment Satterthwaite very gently withdraws all the clothes once more, and the poor man, not disturbed upon the second occasion, sleeps on till he is nearly frozen to death—for Stephen never performs this experiment except in the depth of winter; and when in the morning the patient eventually awakes, half perished with pains in his limbs and rheumatism in his head, he is agreeably surprised with Satterthwaite's voice

from the next room, exclaiming, "I say, is not that fun?"

Once Satterthwaite successfully played off Smollett's old trick; and having fallen in with a simpleton who was quacking under the Homœopathic sages, and who lived by rule, he got away his trowsers and waistcoat after he had gone to bed, and by dint of his own dexterity sewed them up in such a manner as to decrease their capacity nearly one-half without externally betraying the alteration. Of course they were replaced while his patient was asleep.

In the morning he was the first to call his "dear friend" to go out shooting—fine day—birds plenty—every body happy—everything gay. The unfortunate invalid, who lived in constant fear of dropsy, endeavoured to obey his amiable friend's summons; but his attempts to dress himself were wholly unavailing. In the innocence of his heart, and the entirety of his confidence, he mentions this appalling circumstance to his dear friend Satterthwaite.

"By Jove," says this agreeable acquaintance,

"what can have happened?—My dear friend, how you are swelled!"

"Me!" cried the other—"this is dreadful—do you think—eh?"

"I don't know," says Stephen; "but I cannot be deceived—come down—try and button on the things as well as you can—come down—send for the doctor—upon my honour, I believe it is a violent accession of ascites; but I never saw a case of dropsy so sudden before."

The invalid is absolutely terrified at the appearance which he had so long and sensitively dreaded. He goes down stairs, communicates his apprehensions to the other friends who are waiting breakfast; a man is ordered to be dispatched for the doctor, when Satterthwate bursts into a fit of laughter, and cries—

"It's all me—it's my joke—is not that fun?"

Whether the Homœopathic patient died of the alarm so produced or of the advantages of the system to which he adhered, I know not; that he resteth now in Chesterfield churchyard is most true.

Amongst other things Stephen thought proper

to do in the same line was a trick he played upon a Major O'Callaghan, a fine portly Irishman, with shoulders as broad as his humour, and a sword as sharp as his wit, and who was looked upon as a fire-eater, to whom the slightest contradiction would have been death to the offender. Him the facetious Satterthwaite contrived to put into the most ridiculous situation, and one which proved that, however brave he might be as regarded his fellow-creatures, he was, under certain circumstances, as great a coward as his neighbours.

One night, the Major, after having recounted various wonderful stories about himself, in which tiger-killing and snake-scotching formed very remarkable features, he—as, indeed, some of us had wished him to do some time before—retired to bed. He, unlike the wretched victim of salt and horse-hair, sank into a slumber—probably not over gentle; but just as he was beginning to dream of something particularly agreeable, he put his hand out of the bed and felt something extremely cold and clammy; he raised up the bed-clothes with his foot—it

was something long and round; he stretched out his hand still further, and found it was a huge snake coiled on the counterpane. Out jumps the Major, crying for help and for mercy —because killing a snake in the daylight, and finding one by way of bed-fellow at night, are totally different matters. The moment this occurred, Satterthwaite rushed out of his room, crying, "What fun—here's a joke!" The son of Mars had been thus terrified by an eel-skin stuffed with wet bran.

The Major, however, did not think the joke quite so good as Mr. Stephen Satterthwaite did, and the first motion he made upon the announcement of its author was to break that respectable gentlemen's head—what happened? Stephen saluted him with the whole contents of a water jug which was on a stand in the corner of the room, and made his escape, crying "More fun, —nothing like fun!" And when O'Callaghan, whose rage, like other fires, was rather fed than depressed by the application of a small quantity of the opposing element, declared his intention of treating the affair seriously in the morn-

ing, the master of the house pacified him entirely by telling him that Satterthwaite was a privileged person, one of the most agreeable companions in the world, and without whom it was perfectly impossible to exist, especially in a country-house.

To me one of these fellows is extremely like what I once heard a countryman say at Headington (I wonder where Susan Wells is now?) of just such a bore in humble life. "Sir, he's for all the world like a dog at a game of nine-pins; the moment he sees the ball run, in he goes, upsets this, knocks down that, till all the pins, king and all, though he be as big as the one the Parson seed at Spithead, are tipped over topsy-turvey, and the whole tote of the business is bothered." These people expose you alike to your best friends and your bitterest enemies, which to them is equally good sport; and what makes the matter worse, they always contrive, by some means or other, to make you an accomplice in their performances, without either your privity, knowledge, or consent.

Among persons of this sort there is nothing at

which they will stop. When Satterthwaite was at school, there was a wheelwright's shop which overhung a valley where bricks were made; his delight was to turn the wheels which were left outside the shed at night straight up on their tires and let them go; away they rolled, and reeled like drunken men, and equally unconscious of the mischief they were doing, rolled and reeled over all the still soft bricks which were ranged in rows to harden. Stephen also rejoiced in tying hackney-coaches to fruit-women's barrows unperceived by the parties most particularly interested, and then calling "Coach."

"He lisped in numbers, and the numbers came."

The anxious Jarvey drove up with an Irish tail at his heels, very little coveted or expected, and which at no time can be very agreeable to a man with the reins in his hand.

Another jest was knocking up an accoucheur in Russell Street, Bloomsbury, to visit, in a case of emergency, a spinster of sixty in James Street, Buckingham-gate, leaving the said accoucheur to pay the coach-hire there and back. A third frolic

was despatching an attorney of Marylebone, at twelve o'clock at night, to make the will of a client at Cripplegate, whom, when he got there, he found as well as ever, and just gone to bed from a comfortable supper with a party of friends, for which the said attorney-at-law was just ten minutes too late. One night he rang the bell of a respectable poulterer in Piccadilly, to ask if the Bishop of Norwich was at home; and on another, roused the respectable family of a calculating carpenter in Clerkenwell, to know whether he could say five words to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

But Stephen transcended all these minor achievements,—he invented schemes which have gained and left him a prodigious reputation. The only thing which in my mind had anything like ingenuity in it, he played off in a country-house where I was staying with a large party. And where, except perhaps in a ship on a long voyage, where do people know so much of each other as in a dear, great, rambling country-house? There the tempers and dispositions of the assembled group develope themselves freely

and naturally; all the struggles which are made in London society are attempted under the same roof in vain; restraint seems thrown off, and *that* which is, however intelligible to English men and women, a sealed book to foreigners, is the delightful homeliness of feeling in an English country-house.

Amongst our party was Stephen; and amongst the party, Stephen had discovered a lady of some forty years of age, perhaps more, who, strange to say, preferred, to his jolly rubicund countenance, the placid charms of what is conventionally termed "a quiet gentlemanly man," a nice person, pale, and delicate, who never looks hot, and never says any thing. Stephen marked this elegant nonentity for his special vengeance, and having first led on the unfortunate lady to admit her admiration of his person and his sentiment,—a word which ladies turned of forty are extremely fond of using,—he, in the course of events, retired to rest.

About half an hour after we were all—at least, I speak for myself—in bed, loud cries of fire rang through the house; everybody jumped

up, and men and women, half dressed, or rather half re-dressed, rushed down the staircases, candlestick in hand, as if lights were necessary to find the fire, into the drawing-room, where we found Satterthwaite stretched out in an arm-chair. Seeing him dressed and apparently collected, everybody inquired of him what he knew of the cry of fire, and what had really happened? To these questions he made answer none; but, rising from his seat, proceeded to take the young quiet gentlemanly man by the hand, and advancing with him, in the most serious and solemn manner to the lady before mentioned, he said, in a tone of the most perfect gravity, "Permit me, Madam, to present you the soul of sentiment in a white cotton night-cap." I admit that we all burst out laughing. The lady has never forgiven Stephen, nor the white cotton night-cap.

He was staying at Beaconsfield—a town now made classical by its vicinage—and passed for a very steady sort of person; but, unfortunately, opposite to the inn at which he had taken up his quarters,—and he was stopping there only to

carry on some greater practical joke,—opposite to the inn there lived a man and his wife in a small house which they solely occupied, but kept no servant; it stood in a sort of row, and nobody was more respectable than this ancient pair. If they had a failing, they had but one,—but *that* Stephen unfortunately discovered.

On certain days this patriarchal pair used to go on a visit to their son and his family at their farm-house some three miles "down the road," where the filial hospitality was largely displayed, —their welcome was warm,—their cheer good, —and, (if truth must be told, it must,) when they came home at night, the distance they had to walk was not so much in length as breadth, and when they reached their Lares and Penates upon these occasions it was generally past midnight.

One fatal night they came home—as usual, singing a sort of "John Anderson my Jo, love" duet; for although, as a punster would say, Timmins had never played a base part as a husband, he was extremely fond of singing one when he was a little elevated,—they reached the

door of their house,—at least so they thought, —for they mechanically measured ten steps from their neighbour's door, which they were sufficiently sensible to know brought them to their own. Old Mr. Timmins fumbled in his pocket for the key and found it; he then proceeded to fumble for the lock, but he could *not* find it.

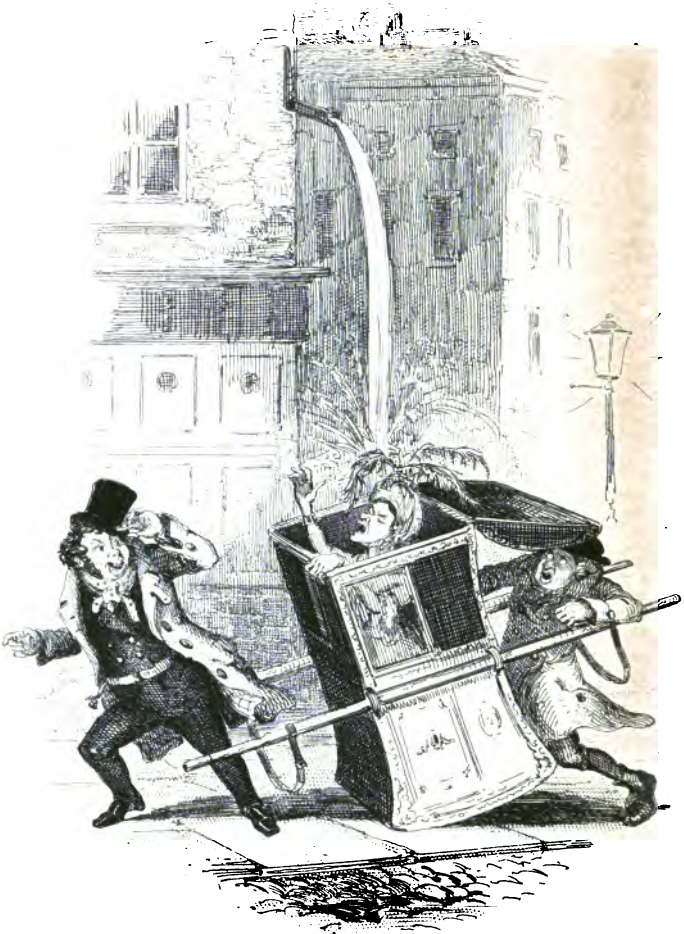
"My dear Mrs. T.," said the poor old gentleman, "somebody has run away with the key-hole!"

"My dear Mr. T.," replied his better and bigger half, you have drank too much ale. Who should steal a key-hole? I tell you, Mr. Timmins, you are not near the door. You are right agin the wall."

"Why, do you know, Mrs. T., that's true," said the husband; "but I thought I had gone far enough to find our door, because I saw number four here on the left, and number six here on the right; so, in course, I naturally thought ours, which is number five, must be between,—don't you see, Mrs. T."

The worthy old man then proceeded again to reconnoitre number six,—then number four,—

but still there was nothing but wall;—in fact, there was no number five. The poor old people thought themselves suddenly demented, or, to tell the truth, began to believe that they were excessively drunk, indeed,—a belief which induced them to bear all the evils and inconveniences of their situation rather then alarm their neighbours; and there they stood pottering about, poor old Timmins, with his key in his hand, poking against the wall, hunting still for a keyhole. At length, since necessity has no law, they resolved to call for assistance,—a call which was promptly obeyed, and their neighbours rallied round them with lights and lanterns to ascertain the real cause of their discomfiture; when, lo and behold! it appeared that after dusk the frame of the door had been removed, and the door-way had been regularly, newly, and completely built up with brick-work, at (as it appeared) the expense of my friend Stephen, who, as soon as the real truth was discovered, shouted from his window, where he was attended by two or three friends to see the result—"What—here's a joke!—eh, isn't that fun?"



Cockton del.

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fear of him.—As has often been justly remarked—the mind, the temper, the disposition of man vary so greatly with events, the weather, constitutional disposition, and a thousand other things, that nothing can be more dangerous—perhaps unsafe is a better word—than a practical joker;—besides which, I cannot endure a man who is always happy—always boisterously mirthful—with a sort of self-satisfied grin upon his countenance, and a cracked trumpet-like voice of self-gratulation, perpetually sounding in one's ears. Let a man be happy—let him be rich—let him be perfectly independent of the world; but do not let us see a great jolly fellow shaking his sides, and chuckling at nothing but his own consciousness that nothing can happen to affect his own comforts or interests till he dies. Satterthwaite was one of these insensible animals; nothing could move his tenderness or pity. He lived to joke—and joke he did to some purpose, as we shall see in the sequel.

I was just on the point of quitting the house where we had been staying, where the scene of the cotton night-cap had been so effectively per-

formed, when two or three of us were invited by a friend who, for evident reasons, must be nameless, to have a day's shooting at his place, about twelve miles off. I very gladly accepted the invitation, although the pleasure I anticipated was in no small degree clouded, by finding that Satterthwaite was to be of the party. A practical joker, with a gun in his hand, is not the most agreeable companion in a *battue;* however, I had said I would go, and go I did.

At the moment we arrived at our friend's house, he had just finished a letter, which he sealed and directed, and laid upon the chimney-piece. Satterthwaite, always meddling and curious, read the address.

"So you have been writing to your old friend Mrs. H.!" said Stephen.

"Yes," replied G., "I have been long enough acquainted in that family to make free, and have written, to say that as we shall be near her house at the end of our day's shooting, I venture to expect her to give us some dinner. As we shall be fifteen in party, I thought it was as well to

let her know of our intentions, or else we might come off with short commons."

G. rang the bell for his servant, and despatched the letter. Satterthwaite, unperceived, followed the man out of the room—at least unperceived I can scarcely say, for I saw him go out, but thought nothing of it. While we were out shooting, Satterthwaite and I got together on one side of a cover, while the rest of the party were beating the other.

"We shall have some fun to-night," said Stephen, with one of his senseless chuckles—"such fun!"

"What's in the wind now?" said I.

"I gave G.'s man a sovereign not to take the letter you saw him send to our fair friend," said he.

"That was rather incautious," replied I; "for the chances are, we shall get no dinner."

"Never mind; anything for a joke," replied Stephen. "I have told the fellow to carry it to the fair lady's husband: he is at this moment nailed to the bench in the town hall, as chairman of the quarter sessions; and the idea that

fifteen hungry sportsmen are to be fed and fêted at his house in the evening will drive him half mad: he is as stingy as old Elwes himself; and the very notion of our attack upon his cellar and farm-yard will throw him into such a rage, that the chances are, he will hurry over his business, confound the guilty with the innocent, and play the very deuce in his court, in order to get home in time to stop the plunder"

"This," said I, "does not seem a very amiable proceeding."

"Capital joke, rely upon it," said he; "it tells two ways; for, when the company do arrive at his house, his lady will have nothing ready to give them, and then they will be starved after the day's work."

"Yes," said I; "but considering that I, and not only I, but you, yourself, are to be victimized with the rest, it does not strike me to be so comical as you seem to imagine."

"Mum," said Satterthwaite: "not quite so silly as that. You see that boy beating, with a bag at his back; in that bag is one of our friend

G.'s cold roast fowls, one of his best loaves, and a bottle of his best claret; abstracted and packed by my man for the purpose. As soon as you feel yourself hungry, down we pop ourselves on a sunny bank, under a convenient hedge, and divide the spoils."

"No," said I; "I must beg to decline the advantage; I shall instantly go to G., and tell him the trick you have played."

"Psha," said Satterthwaite; "you never will enter into a joke."

There was something so truly unfeeling; and, I must add, so excessively ungentlemanlike in the proceeding, that I walked away from him, and inquired of the first of our companions whom I met, where he thought I could find G. He told me that he had walked off in the direction of the house in question, the immediate neighbourhood of which we were then approaching.

As this was the case, I determined on taking the same course, so that if I missed him, I might myself call at the house, and let the lady into the plot formed against us. At a turn of

the road I caught sight of G. walking rapidly forward. I increased my speed, to overtake him, and succeeded in reaching the gate of the court-yard at the same moment. He turned not, spoke not; but the moment he entered the gate, he shut it firmly after him, and locked it, without speaking one syllable to me. In an instant I heard a pistol fired, and a voice exclaim—"I have missed you—go on."

I ran towards a side gate which opened into the yard, but which was also locked,—it was of open iron work, and there I saw the horrid sight,—the lady's husband still holding a pistol in each hand, advanced upon G., and in a voice I shall never forget, exclaimed, the big tears rolling down his cheeks, and his whole frame convulsed with agony—

"You love her—yes—and she returns your love;—take this—defend yourself!" saying which, he offered one of his pistols to his opponent.

The letter which Mr. Satterthwaite had despatched to the husband betrayed a fatal secret which, till then, had remained unsuspected.

Mad with revenge and desperation, he rushed from the seat of justice; and before he decided upon the injuries done to society, sped homewards to revenge his own.

In vain I cried for help; in vain called on both their names, at the moment when they stood facing each other. A window of the house was thrown up, and I beheld the cause of all their rage in a state of distraction.

"Eleanor," cried G., "go—go—leave the window; do not be a witness of this dreadful scene."

"Let her stay," replied the husband; "she is locked into her room; there is no fear of her separating us."

"Kill me—kill me!" cried the wretched woman; "it is I alone who ought to die."

I mingled my cries with hers; I endeavoured to scale the wall; the once dear friends had taken their stand,—their pistols were raised, when, driven to distraction by her despair, the unhappy Eleanor sprang from the window, and fell at the feet of her husband—the fall had so deeply injured her, that she could make no

effort to stay their hands. At this moment I had reached the summit of the wall, when I saw Satterthwaite and some others of our companions approaching.

"What a noise you are making!" cried he; "you cry out as if the house was burning; why, the people half a mile off will hear you."

"Fire, Sir!" said the infuriated husband; "do not add cowardice to crime."

The word given was but too promptly and too well obeyed. The injured husband received the bullet from his friend's pistol in his breast, and fell dead at the side of his wife.

I leaped from the wall, and seizing Satterthwaite by the throat, thrust him against the iron gate, and holding him fast, exclaimed:—

"See, wretch, behold the result of your last performance!"

G., the miserable survivor, fled to America; and the wretched wife died from poison the day after the duel.

So much for PRACTICAL JOKING!

DITTON.

When sultry suns and dusty streets
  Proclaim town's *winter* season,
And rural scenes and cool retreats
  Sound something like high treason—
I steal away to shades serene,
  Which yet no bard has hit on,
And change the bustling heartless scene
  For quietude and Ditton.

Here Lawyers, safe from legal toils,
  And Peers, released from duty,
Enjoy at once kind Nature's smiles,
  And eke the smiles of beauty;
Beauty with talent brightly graced.
  Whose name must not be written,
The idol of the fane, is placed
  Within the groves of Ditton.

Let lofty mansions great men keep—
  I have no wish to rob 'em—
I want not Claremont, Esher's steep,
  Nor Squire Combe's at Cobham.
Sir Hobhouse has a mansion rare,
  A large red house, at Whitton;
But Cam with Thames I can't compare,
  Nor Whitton class with Ditton.

I'd rather live, like General Moore,
  In one of those pavilions
Which stand upon the other shore,
  Than be the King of millions;
For though no subjects might arise
  To exercise my wit on,
From morn till night, I'd feast my eyes,
  By gazing at dear Ditton [1].

The mighty Queen whom Cydnus bore,
  In gold and purple floated;
But happier I, when near this shore,
  Although more humbly boated.

[1] Since these lines were written, this distinguished office and excellent man has departed this life.

Give *me* a punt, a rod, a line,
  A snug armed-chair to sit on,
Some well iced-punch, and weather fine,
  And let me fish at Ditton.

The "Swan," snug inn, good fare affords
  As table e'er was put on;
And worthy quite of grander boards
  Its poultry, fish, and mutton:
And while sound wine mine host supplies,
  With beer of Meux or Tritton—
Mine hostess, with her bright blue eyes,
  Invites a stay at Ditton.

Here in a placid waking dream,
  I'm free from worldly troubles,
Calm as the rippling silver stream
  That in the sunshine bubbles;
And when sweet Eden's blissful bowers
  Some abler bard has writ on,
Despairing to transcend *his* powers,
  I'll DITTO say for DITTON!

THE PLANTER'S BIRTHDAY.

THE following narrative, in its leading facts, I believe to be true. I am not so certain that it has never been given to the public, although I have never seen it in print.

One of the most respectable, as well as opulent planters in a French West India colony, (no matter which,) was Monsieur Philogene Dupres; he was benevolent and humane, and together with his wife, constantly endeavouring to improve the condition of his slaves, at a period long antecedent to that in which our "black brethren" became the objects of a more exalted and extended philanthropy. Dupres, in opposition to the remonstrances of his neigh-

bours, who objected to the indulgence which he allowed his negroes, admitted, as indeed he could not well deny, that they differed from their masters, inasmuch as the one was black, and the other white; but applying the principle, that "a good horse cannot be of a bad colour," he maintained with a zeal and enthusiasm, which would have done credit to the Abbé Raynal himself, that they possessed every quality of mind and understanding in common with the whites, and that nothing was necessary to the full developement of their intellect but care and education.

That with all his efforts towards his grand object in this respect, he ever attained it, is not upon record; but there can be no doubt that when he departed this life his plantation was in the best possible order, his stock of negroes the most peaceable, and best regulated of any in the colony; his crops were flourishing, and his lands productive. At his death, which was soon succeeded by that of his wife, the estate devolved upon his only son, Louis Dupres, whose aim in the outset of his career appeared to be

to tread in the steps of his lamented sire, and maintain the principles and system upon which he had so successfully conducted the estate.

But Louis Dupres, with all these just intentions, was young, and although good-natured in an eminent degree, was not good-tempered; —he was kind and generous, but not having quite so favourable an opinion of the race of whose good qualities his father was so ardent an admirer, he began to find out that, although much had been done with his paternal acres by fair means and sweet words, a little more might be done by a more steady perseverance in the exaction of labour; and although he was too happy to excite his blacks to that labour by encouragement and rewards, still, if he found that his attempts at persuasion were not altogether successful, he had recourse to more frequent punishments than had been inflicted during his father's lifetime.

This alteration of discipline made for some time but little change in the feelings of the slaves; they knew their master was resolved to have the work done—happy to reward with extra comforts or luxuries, the efforts of the indus-

trious; but, on the other hand, equally quick to correct or chasten negligence and idleness. The negroes soon found out what they had to expect, and accordingly applied themselves to work with even greater assiduity than they had done in "old massa's time," well pleased that his successor did not trouble them quite so much upon the subject of their mental improvement as his venerated predecessor, and perfectly happy when the day's work was over, to find themselves well housed, well fed, and well clothed.

Amongst these slaves, or rather at the head of them, was one, called, after his young master, Louis; he had been the favourite of old Dupres, he was born upon the estate on the same day with his present master, and they became, until they advanced in life, up to the period when the difference of rank and station necessarily parted them, associates and playfellows. Young master Louis, and piccaninny Louis, were always to be seen diverting themselves in all sorts of games and frolics, under the fostering care of Monsieur and Madame Dupres, while the black Louis's mother acted as nurse to both—the attachment was

mutual, the boys were never happy apart, and the kind-hearted planter used to instance the engaging manners and graceful playfulness of the young slave as striking proofs of the justice of his theory, that nothing but enlightenment and an association with whites, was wanting to equalize their claims upon the regard and respect of the world.

Louis, then, and his young master, grew up together, till at eight years of age the young master was sent to France for education, and his companion Louis became merely the young slave. But during the previous course of his life, being infinitely quicker than the generality of his race, he had availed himself of the advantages derivable from the initiatory lessons which were given to the heir-apparent; and when he joined his brethren in the field, the black boys of his own age used to listen to his "reading his book" with wonder and surprise.

It cannot be denied that the intercourse which had been permitted to Louis with young master had interested both old master and old mistress in his progress through life, and accordingly as

he grew up he was always put forward, and excited to industry by the promise of future promotion, with the prospective view of being head man on the estate. Emancipating him never entered M. Dupres' head, he would have considered such a course as the most injurious he could pursue—as depriving him of a home, of food, and of clothing, so long as his health and strength remained, and of an asylum in which he might pass the closing years of his life in peace and security. Mr. Dupres, in his most romantic flights as to the civilization of his blacks, never went the length of emancipation.

After an absence of nine years, during which he had completed the education which he considered adequate to his intellectual wants, Monsieur Louis Dupres returned to his home. His surprise at seeing the change which, during his absence, time had wrought in the personal appearance of his parents, was exceedingly strong, but even that was less than that which affected him at the sight of his sable namesake. The little playful urchin, fancifully dressed up to make him look like the associate of "Buckra man,"

rolling and tumbling about, and playing all the antics of a monkey, had grown into a fine, manly youth, a head and shoulders taller than his young master. Their interview was most embarrassing. The white Louis as a child had loved the black child Louis; in those days he had been all the world to him, and he parted from him with tears in his eyes. But he had been enlightened in France—he had been made fully aware of his importance as a West India proprietor, the value of whose property was proportionably increased by the number of his slaves, of whom this Louis was one, who were catalogued, described, and spoken of in conversation, as if they were no more than the brute beasts which formed the rest of the "stock" amongst which they were classed.

Before he saw Louis, on his return, all his recollections were of a little playfellow, in whom, until this knowledge of the world had brought him to a sense of his own position, and of the wide difference which existed between them, he knew only an equal. But when they met, and the affectionate slave, grown into manhood,

addressed his "massa," Louis Dupres started back. Nature, however, for the moment, overcame pride and prejudice, and the young Frenchman shook his former companion heartily by the hand, to the infinite amazement of a lady and gentleman whose estate adjoined that of Dupres', and who were perfectly scandalized at such an outrageous breach of decorum. The expressions of their countenances betrayed their emotions, and young Dupres, although unable to repress his feeling at the surprise of first seeing Louis, felt himself blush at the solecism he had committed.

Louis saw the sudden change in his master's look, and fixed his eyes on his features steadily for a few moments. M. Dupres turned to the lady to say something complimentary to her bonnet, and Louis shaking his head sorrowfully, went his way to his work.

We have already told the reader the sort of master the young Dupres made when at length he came into possession, which he did when he and the black Louis were twenty-seven years of age. Louis, however, was first and foremost

amongst the best men on the property, and on the anniversary of his master's birth, and of his own, was always called forward and given an extra glass of rum, and made the bearer of any *largess* to his brethren, and their wives and piccaninnies.

Perhaps, if it be admitted by naturalists, that the higher passions and feelings of humanity may inhabit the negro breast, no human being could be more devotedly attached to another, than Louis was to his master. His instinct—if it were not sense—taught him, very soon after Dupres' return, to understand the difference of their station, and to regulate his affection for him accordingly. But he loved him—watched his looks—basked in his smiles, and trembled at his frowns; which, however, unfrequently lowered over his brow.

During the nine years which succeeded the return of young Dupres from France, he made several voyages backwards and forwards, to and from Europe, in order to increase his connections, and enlighten his mind. At the end of that period the death of his father placed him in

possession of the estate, and he settled down as a regularly established planter, resolved to put every means within reach in requisition to accelerate the process of money-making, so that he might, while yet in the prime of life, be enabled to retire from business, dispose of his plantation, and retiring to Paris, set up as a man of fortune, and if possible, of fashion.

It may readily be imagined that with this desire and disposition, the whip became gradually more in use on Bellevue property than it had been in other days, and that the punishments were more frequent than heretofore; in fact, Dupres grew by degrees to be a severe master, always doubting that his serfs exerted themselves to the utmost, and most particularly anathematizing them if, in his hearing, the elder ones ventured to express a grateful recollection of what they called "the good old times of poor old massa." The effect produced upon these seniors by this alteration of system was any thing but beneficial; and seldom did a week pass without the report of two or three runaways, who, after a few days, were either caught,

or, tired of starvation, returned to the certainty of a flogging, and perhaps the discipline of the block.

One evening Dupres was returning on foot from a visit to a neighbouring plantation, when he heard footsteps following him; he stopped—so did his pursuers—it was quite dark—all was as silent as the grave—the next moment he heard the sound of some one running towards him, from a different quarter.

"Who's there?" said Dupres.

The answer was a shot from a musket. Dupres stood unharmed—but a heavy fall and a deep groan announced that somebody was wounded.

"Is massa safe?" cried or rather sobbed the man who had fallen.

"I *am* safe;" said Dupres; "what does it mean?"

"Massa safe," replied the same voice, "me die happy."

The noise of the shot instantly brought one or two of the guardians to the spot with lanterns—a gleam of light sufficed to show Dupres the faithful playmate of his early youth on the

ground, bleeding profusely. Dupres and one of the guardians raised him up—he was scarcely sensible, but he pressed his master's hand to his heart and kissed it fervently, while tears rather of joy for his deliverance than of pain for his own suffering fell from his eyes.

"What is all this!" again asked Dupres, who could not imagine it possible that any body could entertain sufficient ill-will towards him as to attempt his life. Such, however, was the case; two slaves who had marooned some days before, had been seen by Louis lurking about the plantation; he thought, as was not unfrequently the case, that they were two of Dupres' blacks, that they had repented, and were trying to sneak back to their huts under cover of the darkness, intending to get him, Louis, or some other influential comrade, to plead their cause with the master; but this not having occurred, Louis did not relax in his observation of the strangers, and finding them still loitering on the path by which his master was to return from his social sangaree and "conversation talk," resolved to keep near in case of need, although

not choosing to accost them. His suspicions were eventually realized, and at the moment Dupres stopped, Louis, who was within a few yards of the path, distinctly heard the well-known "click," produced by the cocking of a gun, and satisfied as to what was to follow, rushed forward just in time to strike down the weapon levelled at his master's head, and to receive the charge in his own leg.

"Who was the villain who fired the shot?" said Dupres.

"Ah, me don't know, massa, me don't know," said Louis: "he do me no harm—me shall be well two three day, and massa him safe and well now."

"Lift him up gently," said Dupres to the bystanders, who had by that time increased in number; "carry him home. I will go call up M. Duplaye, the surgeon, and we will have him looked to directly—remember," added he, "I owe my life to *him*—I shall not forget it."

All this time, Louis, wholly regardless of the pain he was suffering, was clasping his hands as

if in prayer, thanking Heaven that he had been the means of preserving his master.

This incident produced a marked change in the conduct of Dupres. The manifestation of a hostile feeling towards him on the part of his slaves—for that the shot was fired by some of his own people he had no doubt, although Louis even if he had identified them kept his counsel upon that point, satisfied with having preserved his master, and not daring to be the criminator of even his guilty comrades—induced Dupres to reflect upon the course he was pursuing, and instead of attributing the hostility of the culprits, for whose detection he made every seasonable preparation, to the increased severity of his discipline, he wrought himself up into the belief that these serious symptoms of revolt against authority had their origin in the laxness of the system observed upon his property. He recollected that the largest sugar-plantation on the plain at St. Domingo was that of M. Gallifet, situated about eight miles from town. "The negroes belonging to which," says Mr. Edwards in his History, "had been

always treated with such kindness and liberality, and possessed so many advantages, that it became a proverbial expression amongst the lower white people in speaking of any man's good fortune to say, '*il est heureux comme un nègre de Gallifet.*'" M. Odeluc, the attorney or agent for this plantation, was a member of the general assembly, and being fully persuaded that the negroes belonging to it would remain firm to their obedience, at the outbreak of the insurrection, determined to repair thither to encourage them in opposing the insurgents; to which end he desired the assistance of a few soldiers from the town-guard, who were ordered to his support.

"He proceeded accordingly, but on approaching the estate, to his grief and surprise, he found all the negroes in arms on the side of the rebels, and, horrid to tell, *their standard was the body of a white infant which they had recently empaled upon a stake.* M. Odeluc had advanced too far to retreat undiscovered, and he and a friend who accompanied him, together with most of the soldiers, were killed without mercy.

Two or three only of the patrole escaped by flight, and conveyed the dreadful tidings to the inhabitants of the town."

Dupres saw in the attempt made on his life, a warning for the future; and having read M. Laborie's observations upon that revolt of Gallifet's slaves, in St. Domingo, in which he imputes their rebellion, not to the wise and indulgent treatment which they met with, but to the excessive laxity of their discipline, and their extravagant wealth, became rather doubtful of the wisdom of the "soothing system" on his own. "The plantation," says Laborie, "was a perpetual scene of feasting and merriment." On which, Lord Brougham remarks, "If we should take this as the whole account of the fact, it would be sufficient to account for the prevalence of licentiousness, riot, and a rebellious spirit amongst Gallifet's slaves; for surely the possession of so much property, perhaps the enjoyment of so great indulgence, is inconsistent with the condition of bondage."

Dupres accordingly resolved to tighten the reins of control, and to prove, even if the assas-

sins were not discovered, nor of his own gangs, that he was not at any rate to be frightened from his purpose, or forced from the rules he had laid down for the government of his property by foul or violent means.

But something more than this general inducement to an alteration of his policy preyed upon his spirits. He had taken it into his head that his preserver, Louis, who had received in his own person the ball intended for his master, was somehow connected with the plot of assassination. His being on the spot at the time, a circumstance which arose out of his carefulness and watchful anxiety, Dupres considered as corroborative of his suspicions, the entertaining of which, in any degree, would appear marvellous, if the reader were not to be made aware of an under-current of events which was flowing at the same period.

Colonial morality is not, perhaps, the most rigid in the world; and the master of slaves, whatever may be his course of conduct towards the male portion of his subjects, not unfrequently selects some of the exceedingly smart,

pretty, well-figured slave-girls to be about his house. Some one—at least for a time—is specially chosen "to take care of his things," and to act in some sort in the capacity of housekeeper, to whom it is his pleasure—for a season—to be exceedingly kind and humane, sometimes condescending even to playful conversation, and always ready to afford her any little indulgence consistent with her position in his establishment.

It so happened that an olive-cheeked girl, called Adele, had been promoted by Dupres from amongst the "herd," for these domestic purposes; and Adele was dressed better than any slave on the estate; and Adele could read and write, and even "talk conversation," an expression which to some of our readers might not be quite intelligible, unless we were to add that the *acme* of a coloured girl's ambition, if elevated from a low station to what she considers the enviable distinction of being a white man's mistress, is to be able to sit all day, "talk conversation, and comb dog."

Adele was, of her class, exceedingly hand-

some, with fine intelligent eyes, and a manner much above her station; indeed, her good looks, and inherent gracefulness, were generally considered hereditary gifts from her father, who, it was supposed, had before her birth formed an attachment to her mother similar, in most of its points and features, to that which Dupres unluckily had formed for *her*.

That M. Dupres should do exactly as he pleased in his own *habitation* and with his own slaves, might be all quite right, and certainly it is not our wish or intention to peep or pry into the arcana of any gentleman's establishment, unless we are driven to it of a necessity. As for the feeling, whatever its nature or character, entertained by M. Dupres for Adele, it never should have been noticed here, were it not for the facts that Adele did not reciprocate the admiration expressed for her qualities by her master, and that she was fondly attached to Louis, his former playmate, and recent preserver.

Dupres was conscious of his attachment, but still could not conquer the partiality he felt

for the girl. The cruelty of his conduct in endeavouring to alienate her affections from the man whose devotion to him and his interests were—or would have been to any body else—unquestionable, was so obvious, even to himself, that he could not but suspect his humble rival of harbouring in his breast the feelings of a just vengeance so likely to result from jealousy.

Dupres did his faithful slave injustice. Conscious and satisfied of the truth and goodness of Adele, every mark of favour conferred on her by their master afforded him pride and pleasure, and he anxiously looked forward to the "Planter's birthday" to ask her hand in marriage, satisfied that on that anniversary the master would not hesitate to crown his happiness with his consent.

While Louis was recovering from the wound which he had received, the attentions of Dupres were constant; but if he found that Adele had paid him a visit of kindness, and soothed his sufferings by her lively talk, his feelings of jealousy overcame his gratitude, and if truth

were to be told, his hopes were rather that his preserver might die than recover.

Recover, however, he did, and was openly rewarded for his gallantry and affection by the master; not but that all the slaves upon the estate became fully aware of the vast difference in their treatment after the attempt had been made on his life. Scarcely a day now passed in which the discipline of the whip was not administered, and *that* in many instances where the crimes of the sufferers were so comparatively trifling, that in former days a slight rebuke or a gentle remonstrance would have been the extremest punishment. Knowing the favour in which Louis was, or ought to be held by M. Dupres, the other slaves always made their appeals to *him*—begged him to intercede for them, sure that an influence, secured as his had been at the risk of his life, would be successfully exerted in behalf of any one of them doomed to the lash for a trifling fault; and Louis presuming, or rather relying, upon the indulgent consideration of his master, sometimes did plead the cause of his brethren whose faults

appeared sufficiently venial to justify the petition, and had, earlier in the progress of the system, not unfrequently succeeded.

But in the newly-excited temper of Dupres' mind these applications harassed and incensed him, for it was at this period of our little history, that his rage against his preserver had been inflamed to its highest pitch, by the artless admission of Adele to her master of the mutual affection which existed between her and Louis, and of his intention to ask his consent to their union on the approaching birthday, which besides being a "regular holiday" on the estate—at least it had been so for five-and-thirty years, before the present master came into possession—was always considered a day of grace, on which boons were conferred, indulgences granted, faults forgiven, and punishments remitted.

Poor Adele—little did she think how important to her, and to him she loved, would be this ingenuous confession. Dupres had all along fancied the girl could not, would not, dare not, refuse his advances. He knew that Louis was

attached to *her*—he saw them always walking and talking together, in leisure hours, and Louis, when he found his master kind to her, would seem pleased and delighted; but, till her unfortunate declaration of his intentions towards her, he was not satisfied that Adele loved *him*, and that their love had been confessed, admitted, and declared.

"His birthday"—one little month would only elapse before that day arrived—the day when he was to yield up all hopes of triumphing over innocence and virtue—when he was to consent to abandon, what in his heated imagination he believed to be the object nearest his heart, to another. Could he refuse the man who had saved his life? But how saved it? Was it not a plot?—a scheme?—whereon to found this very claim. Could this man, if he valued and esteemed him, persist in gaining and securing the affections of Adele, to whom he must know from circumstances, his master was attached? or was he really blind enough to imagine that he was loading the girl with favours

and presents literally and merely because she was a good servant?

In the midst of these contending feelings, Dupres formed the desperate resolution of getting rid of Louis—not as many who knew the real character of the man might suppose, by means such as had been adopted against himself; but by degrading him, lowering his high spirit, and at the first plausible opportunity subjecting him to the punishment from which he had so frequently endeavoured, even successfully, to save others. He was convinced, from all he knew of his character, that this infliction would either drive him from the estate, or break his heart: and he was moreover convinced that such a display of his impartiality would have a great effect upon the other slaves, who, it must be admitted, were a little jealous of Louis: and more than all, it would debase him in the eyes of Adele, whose affection for him, after all, might be in some degree connected with the position he held amongst his brethren.

Barbarous as this determination may seem, Dupres was base and vile enough to form it, and the opportunity for putting his dreadful resolve into execution presented itself most aptly for his purpose on the day but one before the "Birthday."

It had been customary upon this occasion to commence the preparations for the celebration of the anniversary, on the previous day—flag-staffs were erected on the "brown green" in front of the house, a sort of rustic orchestra was built for the piper, the fiddler, and the tambourine-player, and another temporary kind of booth, where the supper and rum were distributed, and these were decorated with flowers and leaves, and occasionally a *mat de cocagne* was erected for the display of the agility and powers of climbing, for which our black brethren are so famous.

Doubtful from the recent alteration in the policy of Dupres' government of his estate, whether the good old custom was to be observed, and not being able to obtain any information from the overseer, who had quarrelled with the

master six months before, and exceedingly apprehensive of making any application at head-quarters, the negroes resolved upon sending up their old negociator Louis, to inquire the "will and pleasure" of the petty sovereign.

As this address did not involve the interdicted subject of commutation of punishment, the kind-hearted Louis made no scruple to become the spokesman; but things turned out unluckily. He waited till the evening, when work was over, and came into the verandah, just at the moment Adele was entering it at the other end. The master was smoking and drinking his sangaree in the middle room, and hearing Adele's voice, raised himself in his chair and saw, what certainly was nothing sinful in an affianced pair, but which was gall and wormwood to a jealous rival—Louis taking, not stealing, for it was freely given, a kiss from the lips of the gentle Adele.

Knowing all he did of their attachment and proposed marriage, this sight should not have excited the feelings of the master in the manner it did—had he been left alone five minutes, the

ebullition would in all probability have subsided, but unluckily for himself as well as others, the moment Louis saw Dupres, unconscious of having done anything unworthy an accepted and acknowledged lover, he stepped forward, and stood before his master prepared to prefer his petition.

He did so, and in a few words explained the object of his visit, and the wish of his brethren.

No sooner were the words out of his mouth, than Dupres, dashing down the glass which he held in his hand, with a force that shivered it into a thousand pieces, exclaimed,

"Scoundrel!—slave!—haven't I warned you of thus thrusting yourself into my presence with petitions and messages from your fellows—why are *you* sent? because they think I favour you—because you, let your faults be what they may, are never punished—get out of my sight—I hate to look at you—to-morrow, at daylight, *you* shall be punished—yes, sir, punished," repeated he, seeing that Louis started back with surprise and horror at the thought. "Flogged, that's the word, sir, for your insolence, which is the cause of all the insubordination on the estate."

"Massa," said Louis, "pardon, massa, pardon —twenty-six years me live here—me love you—me work for you—never, never have me felt the lash. No, massa, my skin smooth, smooth all over, 'xcept where my wound is, which was meant for massa."

—"Hold your tongue, sir," said Dupres: "I know perfectly well how to value that wound; your skin has been smooth too long—get out of my sight, I say—and mark me, if I don't do what I say to-morrow—go—"

"What flog Louis, massa!" said the slave; the tears running down his bronzed cheeks.

"Yes; flog *you*, sir," said Dupres, "and take your revenge, if you like it—go sir—"

"God help poor Louis," said the slave; "never did me think to see this day." And he went;—and while his master watched his departure, and heard his deep sobs as he passed through the verandah—he was pleased. Yes; pleased! and pleased more than all, by the assurance that the anxious Adele must also have heard his denunciation of her beloved.

Tyrants are mostly cowards; and although

Dupres, like the rest of his countrymen, possessed a full share of animal courage, when opposed to danger in the field; and although his course of proceeding since the assassin's weapon had been levelled at his breast, gave ample evidence that he was not to be intimidated into a change of conduct; still, when the ardour of his passion cooled, and his lip ceased to quiver with the rage which the intrusion of Louis had excited, he felt some compunctious visitations, caused by the violence of his manner, and the severity of his language. There might—we hope there was—something like remorse mingling with his other feelings, for having so spoken, and so conducted himself to the particular individual who had just quitted him; but let the sentiment have sprung whence it might, there is *no* doubt but that he regretted—not deeply, but violently—what he had so precipitately said and done, tempered as it might and should have been by the recollection of past days and long bygone circumstances. The main spring of this repentance was selfishness—he fancied that in his passion he had overreached himself,

that his harshness to Louis, instead of debasing him in the opinion of Adele, might give him the increased claims upon her affection, of martyrdom for her sake; and that as fear and love are not usually considered compatible, the arbitrary power he had threatened to exercise, might make her hate *him*, instead of conducing to a contempt for her lover.

And there was more than this to be considered—Louis, however occasionally envied by his brethren, possessed unquestionable influence over them; Dupres thought he had heard the word "revenge" muttered amidst the sobs which stifled the agonized slave's voice as he departed from his presence, upon which he had replied. Dupres cared not, as we have seen, for the "assassin's blow," he despised clamour, and would oppose to the last, an interference with what he held to be his right; but Louis, of his class, was a powerful opponent—the recollection of M. Gallifet's slaves again flitted across his mind, and by the same perverse and perverted mode of reasoning which led him to associate his preserver with his intended murderer, he

became first apprehensive, and in less than half an hour, certain that Louis would incite the slaves on the estate to revolt, and that instead of a joyful anniversary as heretofore, "The Planter's Birthday" would be a day of blood.

It had not been long before the period of which we are now speaking, that a circumstance had occurred in a neighbouring island, which flashed into the memory of Dupres, in the midst of his reflections and considerations as to the precipitancy and injudiciousness of his conduct towards Louis. A slave-woman, who belonged to proverbially the kindest master in the colony, in consequence of having been spoken to by him harshly, resolved to have her revenge—for a considerable length of time the determination rested in her mind, but its execution was delayed only because she could not decide upon the most efficacious way of putting it into practice.

At length, having considered of every means in her power to do the benevolent man, who in one hasty moment had offended her, some serious mischief, she came to the conclusion

that nothing, except taking his life, which she feared to do, could injure him so much as destroying his slaves; and in pursuance of this scheme of revenge, she poisoned two of her own children, over whose existence, although the master's property, she fancied she had a parent's control.

This little anecdote, illustrative of a negro's revenge, certainly came to Dupres' recollection at rather an inauspicious period, and growing nervous and anxious, he rose from his seat and paced the room; looked into the verandah, half fearing, half hoping, to see Louis still lingering near. But no—he was gone—so was Adele. Dupres became more restless; nay, to do him justice, he began to repent of his rashness and violence, even upon better grounds than apprehension or self-love; but to send for Louis, to recal his violent language, or revoke his hard decree, would have been degrading to a white man, especially one who had received a polished education, and proposed to figure in the salons of Paris.

No! that was impossible; what he *would* do

was this: when Adele came as was her wont to inquire about his supper, and what he would like and what she should do, he would tell *her* that he did not mean all that he said to Louis —that he was vexed at the time—that the slaves deserved no indulgence, and that Louis should not have permitted himself to be persuaded to come to him, and interrupt him in his privacy by such absurd requests—that he did not care about the celebration of his birthday—that he had no reason to rejoice in having been born, and that the anniversary brought with it no pleasant recollections nor the excitement of any hopes of future happiness.

This he thought would soothe his early playmate—this he hoped would please Adele; but then—the birthday—whether celebrated gaily or not, under his sanction, would be celebrated by the slaves, who would as ever heretofore avail themselves of the privilege looked upon almost as a matter of right, of asking grace and favour, and especially in respect to the marriages of any of the young couples who were attached to each other, and were sufficiently moral to desire

to be united by the rites of the church before they "paired off;" for much as it may shock the ears of the black-loving philanthropist, true it is that the prejudice is, or at least was in those days, not universally strong in favour of any particular ceremony, by way of prelude to the establishment of a slave *ménage*.

Endeavour as he might to avoid and evade the gaieties which seemed to him, in his present state of mind, only so many mockeries, he could not steer clear of these established rites, and therefore he determined not to prohibit, although he resolved not to appear to countenance the festivity.

Adele came as usual to attend her master, to inquire what were his commands; but the bright eye and the light step were wanting. She had been crying, and crept rather than bounded as usual into his presence. When he saw her thus, he was at first undecided how to act; whether as he had proposed to himself to humble his haughty spirit, and admit to her his regret for the intemperance of the language, and the violence of the threat which he had fulmi-

nated against Louis, and so by soothing her sorrows, perhaps, render her less obdurate: but no—that hope was past—he knew that they were affianced—the struggle was but short in his mind, his love had turned to hate—he loathed her for her constancy and affection, and the sight of her thus sad and sorrowing, confirmed him after a moment's struggle in the determination to wreak his vengeance at all hazards upon Louis in the morning. He dismissed her with a sharp answer to her gentle questions, and she stole silently from his presence to her bed, to ponder with grief and anguish on the approaching events of the morrow.

The morrow came—Dupres visited different parts of the plantation—spoke on business to the overseer—it may be recollected they never spoke except on business—complained of a laxity of discipline, a boldness of manner and insolence of speech on the part of some of the slaves which he was determined to check; and having harangued upon various points in a tone of magisterial discontent, instanced Louis as one of those who appeared spoiled by good

usage, and as presuming too much upon an excess of favour which had been shown him.

The overseer, who had grown old in the service, and who remembered the infant days of Louis, his association with the master, and who was well aware of his devoted attachment to him, of which, as every body knew, he had so recently given so striking a proof, did not venture to argue the point, but contented himself with the delivery of a fact.

"Louis, sir," said he, "is gone."

"Gone whither?" asked Dupres.

"That, sir, I cannot tell you," replied the overseer; "he was not to be found at the morning muster, nor has he made his appearance since."

"He can't have marooned?" said Dupres.

"I should think not," was the overseer's reply.

A thousand thoughts rushed into the mind of Dupres. Was he really gone? Was he dead?

"But," added the overseer, "there are five or six others absent this morning."

"Five or six," repeated the master.

He was convinced that the influence of Louis had been exerted to stir up a revolt against him, in consequence of the occurrences of the previous evening. All the visions of St. Domingo were again conjured up before him, and again he fancied himself a second M. Gallifet.

"What have they gone for?"

"I know of no particular reason for their going," said the overseer, rather drily, and with a somewhat peculiarly marked emphasis on the word "particular."

"They must be pursued," said Dupres, "overtaken, brought back, and punished. This must be crushed in the outset."

"There have been a good many of them who have run off to escape flogging," said the overseer, "but you know, sir, they have come back again."

"Yes," replied Dupres, "and have escaped their just punishment through the intervention of this very Louis who has now gone off at the head of a whole gang. This case must be met with extreme severity, or discipline will be at an end."

Now it was that Dupres felt satisfied he might wreak his vengeance upon the unhappy object of his jealousy—a jealousy which raged with equal fierceness, even though his love of Adele had curdled into hate. It was not jealousy of her affection for Louis; it was the pure envious jealousy of his success with *her* that actuated Dupres, and he hurried back to his house, in order to obtain the assistance of the police stationed at the Bureau de Marronage, to hunt down his runaways, while too anxious for the fulfilment of his revenge to wait patiently the result of the search, and too much agitated to remain inactive at a moment of such excitement, he hastily quitted the verandah, up and down which he had been, for the previous half-hour, pacing, and struck across the open plain, towards a small grove of tamarind-trees, in which it was no uncommon thing for idle slaves to conceal themselves, if they could, during the day, contriving, if possible, to steal back unobserved to their homes at night; for generally speaking they are of

"A truant disposition, good my lord,"

and Dupres resolved upon "hunting" this little tope, as it would have been called in the East Indies, in the hope of finding the deserters located there: a circumstance which, involving no organized design of any serious plot against himself and his property, but rather indicating the stolen enjoyment of a day's idleness, would have greatly relieved his mind from the apprehensions which filled it, and which, to say truth, were still strengthened by his consciousness of the influence Louis possessed over his slaves, and the unlooked-for severity with which he had treated him the night before.

Dupres entered the grove—traversed it in various directions—no deserters were there. He passed through it, and began to ascend a gentle acclivity, from the top of which, he could command a considerable extent of open ground and might espy some of his vagrant serfs, about whose intentions and destinations he was more especially uneasy, as he had ascertained that the absentees were some of the best men on the estate, and in no degree addicted to vagrancy,

for which so many of the slaves have an irresistible passion.

Mr. Barclay, in his *Practical View of Slavery*, says (p. 171), "As desertion and the punishment of it have been the subject of so much misrepresentation, and unfair inference, in England, it may not be superfluous to add a few remarks while the subject is under consideration. In some few cases, no doubt, it may be occasioned by improper treatment; but nothing can be more unwarranted than to set this down as the general cause; for the best treatment often cannot prevent it. The evil has its foundation in the improvident, indolent, and wandering disposition of many of the Africans, and some few also of the creoles, which no encouragement to industry, no attention or kindness on the part of the master, can overcome.

"I," says Mr. Barclay (who resided twenty-one years in Jamaica), "have myself the misfortune to own two Africans of this description, and cannot better illustrate my assertion than by describing them. They will do nothing what-

ever for themselves, and prefer an idle wandering life to any possible domestic comforts. Land in full cultivation has been frequently given them for their support, and as long as it continued to yield plantains and edoes they gathered them; but, although allowed the same time as other people, they would never take a hoe in their hands, to clear it, and of course it was overrun with weeds. This not availing, desertion continuing, and their master being frequently called upon to pay for the thefts and depredations they had committed on other negroes, a weekly allowance of provisions was given them (in addition to their land, and their regular days), that they might not be driven by hunger to commit theft, or desert. Yet all this has not reclaimed them; they will sometimes come and take their weekly allowance on Monday morning, but instead of going to work, start off to the woods, and will not be seen again for a month. Instead of giving them, like the others, their annual allowance of clothes at once, they are supplied as they stand in need; and they have been known to sell a new jacket for a quarter-dollar,

that had cost their master four dollars. If a second shirt is given them it is readily bartered for a bottle of rum, and washing is entirely out of the question."

Of such as these M. Dupres was blest with his fair proportion, increased, as has been already observed, since his assumption of the government, and if it had been half-a-dozen of this class who had disappeared, he would have been prepared for the event, and not altogether solicitous as to their eventual return; but *that* was not the case.

As he was slowly ascending the hill, pondering these things, and in, perhaps, the worst possible humour man ever enjoyed—as the phrase goes—he approached a small tuft of stunted foliage, which, as he neared it, was somewhat rudely and suddenly shaken—he stopped short.

"Who's there?" cried he.

No answer was given—but as he advanced three steps nearer the bush, a black man sprang from his hiding-place and bounded away before him—it was Louis himself—Dupres called to

him to stop—Louis, instigated by some undefinable feeling, still ran. Dupres followed him at the top of his speed, but he would not have caught him had not the foot of the slave tripped over a stone, which brought him to the ground. Dupres was up with him in a moment.

"Rascal!" said Dupres, "ungrateful rascal! —how dare you fly from me? rebel, traitor, runaway that you are."

"No, massa—no," said Louis; "me no traitor, no rebel, no!"

"It's false, scoundrel!" cried Dupres in a phrensy of rage; "you have carried off my slaves —you are in a conspiracy, a league against me, with the miscreants whom you have so often begged off, before."

"No, Massa—no," said Louis.

"Do I lie, sirrah?" exclaimed the planter, striking him in the face. The blow (so wholly unexpected) brought Louis to the earth; but he was on his feet in an instant again, and again his master struck him—the blow was returned, and Dupres measured his length in the dust: he attempted to rise, but Louis throwing himself

upon him, placed one of his knees on his chest so as to prevent his moving.

"It's all too late now, massa, the blow has been struck. Hear me, massa, hear me—me have loved you dearly, massa, dearly, like my broder—me work for you, me do all me can for you, me save your life, massa—but no good, no —massa bid me go, massa say me should be flog—six and twenty years have I lived—no lash ever touch me; but no, him too late now, all is over."

"Let me get up," said Dupres, vainly struggling with his powerful opponent.

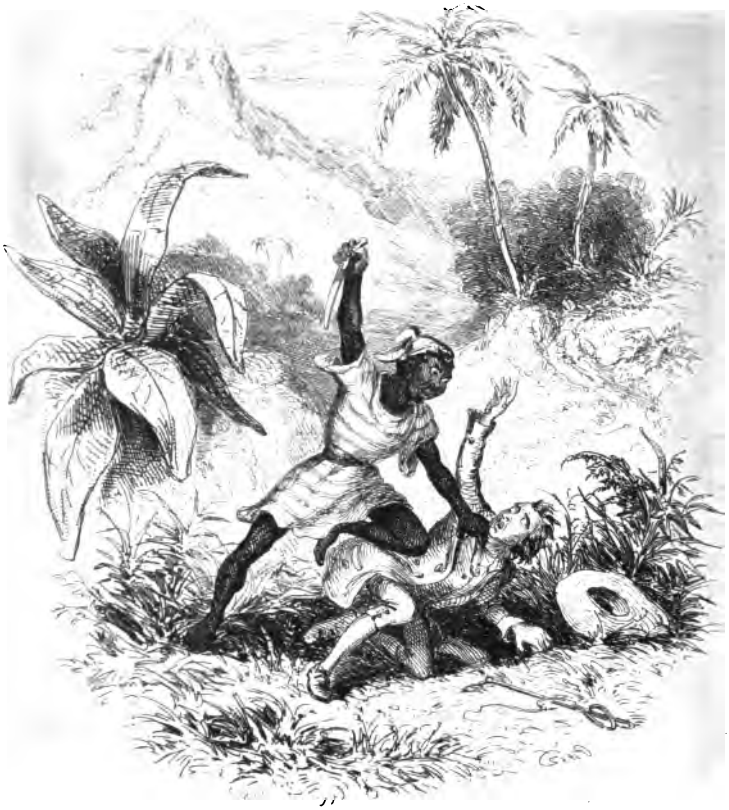
"No, massa, not yet, massa," said Louis, drawing from his pocket a sharp-pointed two-edged knife.

Dupres struggled again, but in vain.

"Louis," said he, "forgive me, forgive me; I have been wrong."

"No, massa, no," said Louis, "me forgive you, massa, but you will never forgive me. Oh, massa, massa! you do not know my heart? Poor Adele, massa—poor, poor Adele!"

"She shall be yours," said Dupres.



The Death Struggle.

London: Hurst & Blackett, Publishers, Successors to Henry Colburn.

"Look, massa, me no runaway—me could not bear to be flog, least of all by *your* order, massa—me hide away to-day, to-morrow your birthday, and mine, massa—me thought you would forgive me then, then me should have come back and beg pardon; but no! no! him too late—me have struck my massa—massa hates poor Louis! No—no—him past now."

Saying which, the faithful Louis raising his right hand above his head, struck the glittering blade, which it grasped, with all his force into his heart, and instantly fell dead upon his master's bosom.

Let not the reader ask what befel Adele—let him be satisfied by knowing that that year's celebration of the "PLANTER'S BIRTHDAY" is remembered in the island to this hour.

THE END.

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